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**A QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE EXPLORATION OF THE  
PROCESSES ASSOCIATED WITH ETHNIC IDENTIFICATION**

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## **Abstract**

Ethnic identity formation requires the consolidation of external and internal processes. While there may be some definitional consistency across ethnicities, regardless of the external audience; who this audience is and their attitudes towards 'us' have a critical influence on our sense of ourselves. People may *decide* the basis of their ethnic affiliation and how to present this identity to the outside world. But such choices are externally structured. The *reaction* of 'others' to 'us' (racist stereotyping, for example) will affect how we see and choose to present ourselves and the salience which our ethnicity holds in our lives.

The thesis uses data from a quantitative and qualitative follow-up of (ethnic minority and majority) respondents to the Health Survey for England: which employed a nationally representative sample of Bangladeshi, Indian, Pakistani, Caribbean, Irish and white British people. Principal components analyses identified dimensions of ethnic identity for the different ethnic groups explored. Qualitative content analyses were then undertaken to explore dimensions of identity discussed in the follow-up interviews.

Four underlying dimensions of ethnic identity were determined quantitatively: related to participating in customs or holding beliefs which could be considered traditional to your ethnic group; attitudes towards the cultural assimilation of minority groups into the 'cultural majority' in Britain; participating in ethnically-specific communities; and membership of a racialised group. These findings suggested inter-ethnic similarity, but intra-ethnic diversity, in the ethnic identification processes employed. The qualitative analyses provided further illumination, particularly into the role of label definition and choice and the processes underlying them.

The findings allow important insight into the motivations underlying people's ethnic definitions, including the importance of the 'other' in (internal) identity definition and the role that the perceptions and treatment of people from (white and non-white) ethnic minority groups by members of the 'ethnic majority' may have on people's self-identity.

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## **Chapter 1      Introduction**

This argument [that ethnicity is a natural category reflecting the innate inferiority of Blacks] is about as conclusive as if we were to select all the white men...with grey eyes, and to argue that, because the colour of their eyes differs from that of the remainder, therefore the two classes belong to different races. (Smith 1859:227)

Despite an increasing interest in ethnicity in Britain, health research, particularly, has tended to treat ethnic categories as reflecting undifferentiated groups: failing to explore the ontological status of ethnicity – what being a member of a particular ethnic group means. This is partly due to the dominant assumption in epidemiological research that the ethnic differentials found among various social and economic characteristics are a consequence of innate, and therefore static and objectively measurable, characteristics related to ‘ethnic’ or ‘racial’ difference, which can be investigated using crude and inflexible assessments of ethnicity. Perhaps not surprisingly research findings based on such analyses have often focussed on, or at least implied, universal genetic and cultural explanations for the relationship between ethnic status and other indicators with little explicit interpretation of what ‘ethnicity’ is or means (Smaje 1996, Nazroo 1998). (For further discussion of this, see Sheldon and Parker 1992, Bhopal 1997). Despite the fact that there will be limited discussion of the relationship between ethnicity and health here; this work originates from my involvement in research exploring ethnic inequalities in health (Karlsen *et al* 1998, 2002, 2005, Karlsen and Nazroo 2000a,b, 2002a,b, 2004, 2006a,b), and the frustration which has developed from this use of such ‘untheorised’ (Nazroo 1998) and potentially short-sighted measures of ethnicity and their apparent unquestioning application to measures of health and mortality.

Studies which attempt to explore the relationship between ethnicity and health traditionally use measures of ethnicity based on country of origin and skin colour. So, while work exploring ethnic differentials in health has developed from a number of perspectives, the ‘untheorised’ approach typically adopted by epidemiological research in this area allows culture to be mapped onto reified ethnic categories and essentialised (Ahmad 1996, Nazroo 1998, 2001). While this is presented as an empirically driven approach, the associated methodology and interpretation presume that ‘ethnic/race’ variables represent true and fixed genetic or cultural differences between groups, which lead to differences in health across them. These genetic or cultural differences are, however, often assumed - after (often inappropriate (Kaufman *et al* 1997, 1998)) statistical adjustments to ‘account’ for the existence of other influences (McKenzie and Crowcroft 1996) - rather than being directly measured (see, for example, Marmot *et al* 1984). The interpretations which follow therefore involve further assumptions, often made on the basis

of ethnic stereotypes. As a consequence, culture or 'ethnicity' itself becomes the *cause* of health differentials (Sheldon and Parker 1992).

While there are, obviously, examples of informative and interesting work stemming from an epidemiological approach to the exploration of the relationship between ethnicity and health, there are also therefore shortcomings which are apparent in much of it (see Nazroo 1998 for more discussion of this). Heterogeneous cultural groups are combined for analysis (into 'non-white', 'Black' or '(South) Asian' people, for example), yet findings are interpreted as if they constitute a homogeneous unit. Analyses are sometimes conducted on a single 'ethnic' group, without any comparison (from the literature or otherwise) of how, or indeed whether, these health experiences or beliefs differ from those of other groups. Again, the assumption being that simply because these subjects constitute an ethnic (usually minority) group, in some sense, they are therefore also problematic, such that any comparison is considered unnecessary. This attitude is further supported by policy recommendations which conclude that inherent characteristics of the group are at fault and need rectifying (Sheldon and Parker 1992).

Theoretical discussions of the processes of ethnic group formation suggest that 'untheorised' measures based on skin colour or ancestry could potentially be very wide of the mark (Barth 1969, Weber 1978, Hughes 1994, Jenkins 1997). This focus on skin colour and ancestry ignores aspects of the lived experience of being a member of an ethnic group. To truly understand what it means to be a member of a particular ethnic group, and how this experience influences health and other social and economic experiences we (as researchers) need to more appropriately conceptualise the ontological status of 'ethnicity' and how this relates to the processes of ethnic identification and affiliation.

What is at issue here is the recognition of the extraordinary diversity of subjective positions, social experiences and cultural identities which compose the category 'black'.

(Hall 1992:254)

As a first step, we need to establish a common understanding of the development of the concepts under investigation.

## **The conceptual development of ‘ethnicity’, ‘race’ and ‘nation’.**

### ‘Ethnicity’

According to Weber (1978), and others, the concept of ‘ethnicity’, and an ‘ethnic group’, implies:

1. Members of a group, which in turn requires recognition of who is, and who is not a member of that group: a categorisation which may be defined by personal choice by ‘members’ of that group (internally) and/or by an external audience;
2. The establishment of a common identity on the part of group members; and
3. The development of perceived stereotypes related to that group which are imposed on them by other (external) social groups.

Bolaffi *et al.* state that: “it is preferable not to refer the concept of ethnicity to stable groups, but to groups which share certain economic, social, cultural and religious characteristics at a given moment in time” (2003:94). An ethnic group should not, then, be seen as something static, or grounded in anything as inflexible as particular genes or historical or linguistic ancestry, although the common identity *may* be expressed as such. People *choose* what characteristics with which to define themselves, which may or may not have recourse to ideas of colour, language, history or ancestry.

The features that are taken into account are not the sum of ‘objective’ differences, but only those which the actors themselves regard as significant ... some cultural features are used by the actors as signals and emblems of differences, others are ignored, and in some relationships radical differences are played down and denied. (Barth 1969:14)

But, as Weber (1978) argues, such choices are also influenced by the stereotypes that other social groups impose and by the (ethnic and other) group identities of those around them (Smaje 1996, Gilroy 1987).

Ethnic groups, then, rather than being definitive, timeless entities existing independent of the world around them, are entirely historically and spatially located; defined from the outside as well as within. Considering, and therefore exploring, them as if they were otherwise is, therefore, potentially meaningless. The process of ethnic identification is a means of defining yourself as part of an ‘us’ in opposition to a ‘them’, or an ‘other’. An ethnic ‘minority’, obviously, requires an ethnic ‘majority’, even if that ethnic majority has sufficient power to ignore the ethnic dimension to its associations. Being ‘white’ is as much a definition of ethnicity as being ‘non-white’. But ethnic affiliations are mobilised in response to a particular need (for social integration or economic support, for example) which may be considered more apparent in certain (particularly threatening) circumstances; situations which are likely to occur more frequently among ‘minority’/less powerful groups. And differing circumstances may promote the



mobilisation of different forms of ‘ethnic’ identification. Indeed, individuals may define themselves as ‘Black’ in some circumstances, ‘British’, (south) ‘Asian’, ‘Bangladeshi’ and ‘Sylheti’ in others (or as ‘female’, ‘young’ or ‘old’), depending on the criteria considered salient. This creates obvious problems for the collection of meaningful quantitative single-response data to ethnically categorise participants in research.

### ‘Race’ and the evolution of ideas of ‘racial difference’

In contrast to an understanding of ‘ethnicity’ which might contain elements of a chosen cultural identity, the concept of ‘race’ may be considered to be more externally motivated; stemming more from the apparent need of human beings to categorise, identify and control others than the need to form inclusive social groups. To an extent the concepts of ‘ethnicity’ and ‘race’ are similar: both require the maintenance of group boundaries/identification based on perceived similarities between members of a group. However, ‘race’, rather than ethnicity, places emphasis on the process of stereotyping/exclusion by others, a process that inherently contains a judgement of value.

Race creates a ‘group’ only when it is subjectively perceived as a common trait: this happens only when a neighbourhood or the mere proximity of racially different persons is the basis of joint (mostly political) action, or conversely, when some common experiences of members of the same race are linked to some antagonism against members of an *obviously* different group (Weber 1978: 385)

In much the same way as members of an ethnic group are ‘free’ to choose that with which they identify themselves, the characteristics emphasised in racial stereotyping are opportunistic; their wider significance, mythical. As discussed above, Weber’s (1978) definition of ethnic groups allows for the imposition of stereotypes by an external ‘other’. While a role for power is not necessary to a definition of ethnicity, though, the concept of ‘race’ is in some senses dependent on the ability of certain social groups to exploit science, the media and education to promote stereotypes relating to the ‘natural’ inferiority of certain social groups compared with others, which become perceived as ‘common sense’, ‘rational’ and therefore unquestioned attitudes regarding differences between them. Not only for those who may potentially gain from such negative stereotyping, but also potentially among those whom they stereotype. Research suggests that the negative stereotyping of a ‘racial’ group has a significant effect on the self-perceptions of people considered (by themselves and others) part of that group. Further, being a victim of racist stereotyping has been found to be one dimension along which people may define their ‘ethnic identity’ (Karlsen and Nazroo 2002a, Karlsen 2004). Discrimination on the grounds of ‘race’, then, provides us with a more convincing explanation for the persistence of inequalities between different ethnic/‘racial’ groups, than that based on ‘ethnicity’ (Omi and

Winant 1994). The continued assumption that 'race' has a clear, unambiguous, neutral and meaningful definition stems from this desire to categorise: the particular reasons for the pervasiveness of these ideas requires an exploration of early interactions between 'Europeans' and non-Europeans.

The idea of the existence of distinct 'races' was used from the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, to explain the appearance and behaviour of the (supposedly) 'uncivilised' and 'immoral' people 'discovered' by early European explorers. Colour symbolism – where white was seen to be associated with all things good and black, all things undesirable – had been evident at least since medieval times. This symbolism was exaggerated further, 'blackness' coming to be associated with an inversion of everything 'European', 'Christian' and civilised (Jordan 1982).

The Europeans who travelled in pursuit ... of trade, military advantage, religious mission and curiosity carried with them expectations about what and whom they might meet ... A negative representation of the Other ... [which] served to define and legitimate what was considered to be the positive qualities of the author and reader (Miles 1989:20-21)

During the 16<sup>th</sup> century, 'race' was perceived of as a consequence of lineage or descent, rather than biology, with differences a product of ignorance rather than inability: an idea which prompted the 'civilising mission' of Christianity from Europe around this time. From the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, however, ideas of the basis of perceived ethnic or racial differences became increasingly narrow and precise. Phrenology brought arguments that such differences were innate and that, in fact, certain 'races' could not be 'civilised' due to their limited brain capacity. Certain groups were argued to be inherently more suited to carrying out certain tasks, such as heavy labour. Such arguments were used to justify colonialism, the systems of slavery that had been introduced to exploit the natural resources available in these newly 'discovered' colonies and the marginalisation of former slaves in local labour markets (in the US for example) after their emancipation.

So, the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century saw a growing acceptance of science and its ability to explain the basis of nature and society. Ideas of biological determinism, which saw differences between human beings as natural and unchangeable, rather than environmental and therefore adaptable, became increasingly popular. Human beings were argued to be a species made up of a number of races of differing capacity and temperament – recognisable by group differences in appearance (or phenotype). Western Europeans identified a 'great chain of being' (Miles 1989) that organised the different groups they recognised into a supposedly biological hierarchy, with white people from western Europe (with a few exceptions (Curtis 1968,1971, Mosse 1978)) at the top.

Before the slave trade in Africa there was neither a Europe nor a European. Finally, with the European arose the myth of European superiority and separate existence as a special species or 'race' ... the particular myth that there was a creature called a European which implied, from the beginning, a 'white' man (Jaffe 1985:46)

It followed that people could only be understood in the light of their 'racial' characteristics, which 'explained' why some groups were naturally inferior to others. In essence, though, as mentioned above, rather than being based on any scientific fact, these arguments were part of an ideological process to justify the exploitation of the less powerful by the powerful, both by the colonial empires (both before and after the abolition of slavery) and in Nazi Germany, Apartheid South Africa, post-slavery southern USA and elsewhere. In research terms, though, attempts to use scientific, particularly genetic, exploration to lend support to the existence of systematic relationships between phenotype and behaviour have proved unproductive. As Krieger puts it: 'the fact that we know what "race" we are says more about our society than it does our biology' (2003:195). Sadly this has not always meant an end to the prejudice that such arguments have justified.

### Nation

It is argued that the concept of 'nation' is also relatively recent, the geographical mobility of industrialisation producing a breakdown in the social 'bonds' of kinship, religion and feudalism, which were subsequently replaced by an imagined wider social connection produced by the perceived commonalities stemming from the demand for the (national) homogenisation of skills (Eriksen 2002). More recently, arguments about inherent 'racial' differences also played a central role in the creation of conceptions of national origin during the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and still do today (Miles 1989, CCCS 1982). Labour shortages in Western Europe between the 1940s and 1970s saw the development of a contract migrant worker system that encouraged workers from Africa, the Caribbean and Asia to move to the UK for employment. But this migration was met with concern regarding a potential disruption of 'national unity'. Rather than returning to the biological or cultural superiority/inferiority arguments of previous centuries, however, the 1960s and 1970s saw the development of ideas suggesting that it is 'natural' for people to live amongst their 'own kind' and that, as a result, discrimination towards migrants – those not of this 'common community' – was to be expected, a perspective which has elsewhere been called 'the new racism' (Barker 1981). The British Conservative politician Enoch Powell, for example, was concerned with the destruction of cultural homogeneity caused by the influx of immigrants. British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher also voiced concern regarding the potential for immigrants to 'swamp' the culture of England's 'own people'. So while nations were not explicitly seen to be hierarchical, they were argued to be natural and the promotion of national

boundaries was therefore unavoidable (Miles 1989). It has been argued more recently that the supposed need for the 'dispersal' of asylum-seekers arriving in the UK at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, as promoted by the British Labour government under the leadership of Tony Blair, is similarly motivated by ideas relating to the existence of a 'threshold of tolerance' of 'outsiders' among 'British' people (Kundnani 2000). The parallels between Gordon Brown's Citizenship Test and Norman Tebbit's Cricket Test also suggest we have not come as far as we might like to think.

In as far as a 'nation' indicates a geographically-based community, it may be seen simply as a particular form of ethnic group. It is described as having a collective name, a common myth of descent, a distinctive shared culture and a sense of solidarity, as well as an association with a specific territory (Smith 1986). Nations are similarly associated with a form of metaphoric kinship: ties sufficiently strong to have even been described as a form of secular religion (Llobera 1994). There are also some variation between the concepts, however.

The distinguishing mark of nationalism is by definition its relationship to the state. A nationalism holds that political boundaries should be coterminous with cultural boundaries, whereas many ethnic groups do not demand command over a state. When political leaders of an ethnic movement make demands to this effect, the ethnic movement therefore by definition becomes a nationalist movement. (Eriksen 2002:7)

Defining a nation is as problematic as defining an ethnic group, and the idea of the existence of a national character, or *folk*, is as potentially ethnocentric and racist as ideas of racial difference, particularly given the sense of superiority inherent in the denial of ethnic identity by the groups which dominate many nations (Banks 1996). In essence, the promotion of ideas of who is (and who is not) part of a nation can be considered one of a number of examples of the 'rebranding' of racist motivations into more acceptable forms. Lack of access to resources, mistrust and mistreatment can be justified along national, as well as 'biological' lines, and minority groups can continue to be associated, and blamed, for unwanted social change, or for any lack of resources among those seen to be more 'entitled' (Miles 1989, Eriksen 1993). People who wish to continue to hold a xenophobic standpoint can do so without feeling obliged to also label themselves 'racist'.

The commonalities underlying the concepts of 'ethnicity', 'race' and 'nation' address the exploitation of the unempowered by those with the economic self-interest and power to do so: a relationship which is perhaps of increased importance today with the competition inherent in globalisation, which produces further income inequality and employment insecurity and the

“feminisation” and ‘racialisation’ of poverty. Yet the popularity of each of these three concepts has varied over time.

Ethnic group identities or ethnicity have taken on new and important meanings in the modern nation-states; ‘race’ was the popular, political and scientific word for most of the nineteenth century and much of the twentieth, and racism (as the attribution of inherent and unequal qualities to people) remains important, however much a classificatory and biological idea of ‘race’ has lost its force. Nations and nationalism are a product of modernity, and the nineteenth and twentieth centuries’ dominance of the ‘nation-state’ as a political form is the key to this. (Fenton 2003:22)

‘Ethnicity’ has an enhanced strength, Fenton (2003) argues, in the modern world of nationalism, as ethnic communities have become increasingly political, economic and public:

Nationalism has endowed ethnicity with a wholly new self-consciousness and legitimacy as well as a fighting spirit and political direction.

(Smith 1981:19-20, quoted in Fenton 2003:22)

‘Ethnicity’ has also been argued to have become the subject of increased analytic attention as a consequence of the technological shifts and global population movements since the Second World War, which brought people into contact in a way which they had not been before: former ‘tribes’ have become ‘ethnic minorities’ (Eriksen 2002), they have become ‘minoritised’ (Gunaratnam 2003:21). As this would suggest, there are also grounds to suggest that ‘ethnicity’ itself is a modern phenomenon – requiring an appreciation of ‘otherness’ which comes with the physical or virtual contact brought by technological advancement. Such enthusiasm for the study of ‘ethnicity’ also stems from the improved appreciation of the dynamic nature of the social world which this contact provides.

While researchers must be mindful of the socially embedded nature of both racial and ethnic categories and the ways in which they reproduce relationships of power, the term ‘ethnic’ has ‘a much greater claim to analytical usefulness in sociology because it is not hampered by a history of connotations with discredited science and malevolent practice in the way the term ‘race’ is. [But]...a discourse in which the idea of ‘race’ is present remains a powerful feature of common-sense thinking and of the ordering of social relations [today]...and this prevents us from simply abandoning a terminology which includes ‘race’, although we reject the notion of ‘races’ as an analytic term in sociological theory and conceptualisation’ (Fenton 1999:4). ‘Racialisation’ persists, even if its grounds have been shown to be false (Eriksen 2002, Jenkins 1997). The subject of this thesis is the ways in which racialisation, along with the other social meanings

attributed to social differences, influence self-concepts regarding the existence of (and meaning attributed to) a personal 'ethnicity'. In contrast to ideas of 'race' and even perhaps 'nation', 'ethnic' identification has the potential to be a form of dynamic social process. But it should be recognised that this malleability is not unrestricted. Indeed I would argue that its very existence may be considered evidence of the continued relevance of processes of colonisation, including the new forms of colonisation which have occurred with globalisation: with opportunities for 'ethnic' expression restricted according to these ends.

### **The influence of structure and agency: ethnicity as identification**

A key contribution which an appreciation of the role of ethnicity as a form of social identification can make to epidemiological research is in the recognition that an identity, rather than being something innate and fixed, is something that is formed and transformed in relation to the representation of an identity to an external audience and the (actual or expected) reaction of that audience, including, for members of minority (less powerful) communities, the 'opportunities' for the manifestation of an identity permitted by them. Some commentators emphasise that 'ethnicity' is in no way predetermined, objective or absolute:

We only know what it is to be 'English' because of the way 'Englishness' has come to be represented, as a set of meanings, by English national culture (Hall 1992:292)

Exploring 'ethnicity' as a form of social identification will allow for the affect of internal agency (of both the individual and the group) as well as external structuring in its development.

As discussed above, the basis of any ethnic group is the *belief* in common descent shared by members of that group rather than any, what Weber (1978) calls, 'anthropological type' (Jenkins 1997). To an extent, then, people are free to *choose* what characteristics with which to define themselves, and the other members of their (ethnic) group. These choices may shift overtime and with context. But it is also important that our measures are able to recognise the role that external forces play in this 'ethnic' definition. It is argued, for example, that engendering a belief in common 'ancestry' as the basis of ethnic group formation should be seen more as a consequence of collective *political* action, than as a cause in itself (Weber 1978): similar to Marx's (1967) 'class for itself', as opposed to the 'class in itself' which studies of ethnicity and health have often explored thus far. So members of a potential social group may seek out (or even invent) a source of commonality in reaction to a perceived need to organise, rather than vice versa. Being categorised by an external audience will affect this perceived need, as well as our self-perception; although how we react to this categorisation also provides potential avenues for individual agency. So, ethnic and other social groups do not (and can not) exist in isolation from those forces which seek to bind it, and it seeks to bind itself from.

Jenkins (1997, 1994) defines two aspects of identity: the ‘nominal’ (the name) and the ‘virtual’ (the experience). Defining *who is* and *what it is to be* a member of a particular social group requires the consolidation of these internal and external processes. The external imposition of a characterisation will affect the social experience of living with that identity. And even if an identity could be entirely internally defined, engaging with others – particularly those with more power – means that the meaning of a particular identity may be externally controlled, and may vary according to the constitution of this audience (Ville and Guérin-Pace 2005). Therefore defining *who we are*, both by name and in experience, is dynamic and relatively ambiguous and may be heavily influenced by wider society.

So, individual decisions about *who we are* and our lifestyle choices, while appearing to be unbounded, are made within social constraints: what Bourdieu terms “habitus” (1977). Bourdieu argues that while social practice, and related lifestyle choices, have some purpose and practical meaning for the individual; these actions are located within their own particular experience of reality, which is related to their sense of *who* and *what* they are and is therefore at least partially externally defined. The theory of habitus explores the influence on behaviour of symbolic representations which relate to:

a whole body of wisdom, sayings, commonplaces, ethical precepts (“that’s not for the likes of us”) and, at a deeper level, the unconscious principles of the ethos which ... determines ‘reasonable’ and ‘unreasonable’ conduct for every agent (Bourdieu 1977:77)

Maintenance of a particular lifestyle will be reinforced by members of your ‘own’ social group as well as your own (internal yet socialised) ‘common sense’ regarding the appropriacy of the other options available. According to Bourdieu, the only means of expanding this sphere of ‘reasonable’ behaviour is through increasing the lifestyle choices available. Access to which is via forms of ‘capital’ which are delimited by social position. So attempts by social groups to define and appropriate their *own* lifestyle will be restrained and influenced by wider society, including other social groups with more power or capital than their own. In addition to the impact of social position on the availability of particular lifestyle choices, wider society may also influence the development of an identity through the need to establish a lifestyle distinct from other identities with which a group has contact, or is aware of (Smaje 1996). For example, in Parker *et al*’s (1998) study of perceptions of cigarette smoking among US urban African American and Latino youth, smoking was perceived as a lifestyle choice adopted by people from ‘other’ ethnic groups and therefore offered a means of providing links with other ethnic groups, or promoting ethnic difference (or a sense of commonality with others considered members of your ethnic group).

So while identity development will be restrained by structural forces, there is also a role for agency in the response to this. One reaction to such social constraint may be for an ethnic group to develop a form of politicised or essentialist identity as a racialised group:

Ethnic identity, like gender and sexuality, has become politicised and for some people has become a primary focus of their politics. There is an ethnic assertiveness, arising out of the feelings of not being respected or lacking access to public space, consisting of counterpoising 'positive' images against traditional or dominant stereotypes. It is a politics of projecting identities in order to challenge existing power relations; of seeking not just toleration for ethnic difference but also public acknowledgement, resources and representation (Modood 1997:290)

This idea of a 'racialised minority' led commentators in the 1970s and 1980s to use the term 'blackness' as a metaphor for the "expression of a common experience of exclusion and of a common political identity forged through resistance to that exclusion" (Miles 1994:7), although the temptation to adopt this as a further means of essentialising diverse ethnic minority groups into an undifferentiated whole has led to its unpopularity among many writers today (see Modood 1988). But the suggestion that racial discrimination is similarly experienced and has similar consequences for different ethnic minority groups, despite the fact that it may come in different guises, could suggest grounds for such a 'Black' or 'ethnic minority' identity, as I will describe later.

Alternatively, an ascribed negative social position associated with an ethnic minority status may lead to some form of acculturation or cultural adaptation. 'Acculturation' is often, particularly (again) in epidemiological research, used to describe "differences between groups assumed to lie along the same continuum, all moving in the same direction toward greater acculturation to the values and behaviours of the dominant society" (Palinkas and Pickwell 1995:1643, see also Marmot and Syme 1976). In general, I consider this concept unhelpful. By assuming that there are distinct and mutually-exclusive cultures (comprising a number of 'minorities' and a homogenous 'majority'), this definition is, again, monochromatic and rigid; encouraging an emphasis on 'norms' and 'deviants'. Guttman (1999:173) comments that:

the very terminology of acculturation is so mired in prosaic notions of national character traits that even if it was once helpful in drawing attention to issues of cultural diversity and conflict today it too often serves to create, refurbish, and emphasise ethnonational stereotypes

While it may be argued that for some 'acculturation' may involve some assimilation towards



some form of a 'majority lifestyle', it is as likely to involve some adaptation of lifestyle/behaviour towards that of an alternative minority, or associated, culture (Hall 1992). One example of this is found in Jacobson's (1997) qualitative study of young 'British Pakistanis' in London. She found religious identity (in this case, as Muslims) to be more important for the self-definition of these young people, than their status as being 'British' or 'Pakistani'. This distinction stemmed from the perceived attachment of representations of ethnicity to a particular place of origin and to customs and traditions which were non-religious in origin, rather than their (what was considered) 'purer', more universal religious identity. This religious identity also suppressed the conflict between those who felt 'Pakistani' in ancestry, but more 'at home' in Britain. These young people may be seen to have undergone a form of acculturation, in that their traditional culture has, to some extent, been transformed, but this has also involved a resistance to assimilation into the culture of a 'majority' group. Hall (1992) also discusses the way in which globalisation and sustained migration has led to the pluralisation of national cultures and identities. While the challenge of globalisation might lead to the strengthening of local identities (including those of majority groups) and the revival of cultural traditionalism, it may also lead to the production of new 'hybrid' identities.

A further problem with this monochromatic definition of 'acculturation' is its assumption that there is a single 'majority culture', that is static and unaffected by other cultures existing alongside it. In Britain, where it has been reported that chicken tikka masala has taken over from fish and chips as the nation's favourite dish, and the British Asian food industry is a bigger contributor to the English economy than the steel, coal and shipbuilding industries combined (Marr 1999), the shortcomings of such an assumption are obvious. It is also important to remember, here, that these new 'ethnic' fashions have sometimes come at a price: white British palates demanding that traditions are altered to suit them. So:

while many have lauded the appropriation of elements of South Asian cultures it is fundamentally important to recognize that these cultural forms are not simply adopted as part of a process of passive transmission and diffusion into British society. The vast majority are purposefully selected... and consciously modified, diluted and marketed to suit a variety of white British audiences...For example...the diners who cram into the nation's curry and balti restaurants...are seeking and obtaining a product...that, although satisfying the tastes and preferences of many white Britons, actually bears little resemblance to traditional South Asian food. (Burdsey 2004:759)

As McKinney puts it: "[e]thnic culture is palatable to members of the dominant group when they can decide when and how to incorporate it or consume it" (2003:50). This also provides a stark impression of the role of power on the extent to which changing habits may be considered

to alter the fundamental meaning (the 'virtual' aspect) of a particular ethnicity, and also the acceptance of other aspects of 'ethnic minority culture' which can not be so easily adapted for incorporation into the 'majority' lifestyle. There are, however, some aspects of 'minority' cultures which are adopted wholesale by 'dominant' groups, whose 'authenticity' is revered, with demands that they remain 'pure' and unaffected by their interactions with Capitalism (Gilroy 1995).

There are other trends which are more modern and more global, while still seemingly associated with an enduring and acceptable image of, particularly, Blackness – often fashions and celebrities associated with certain sports and music – but which also seem to escape this imposed malleability. More confrontational, reactive and assertive identities exist (associated with, for example, rap and reggae music) which can be recognised as a public “exercising [of] ethnic options” through the adoption of Black styles of speech and dress (Song 2001:70). Indeed, many of these styles have been incorporated as a form of counter-culture by white (and increasingly Asian (Gilroy 1987)) working-class youth (Back 1996). These trends might be seen negatively as a further example of the “opportunistic pillage of other cultural forms” which is enabled by a position of power (Anthias 2001:626). Alternatively they may be seen more positively, as the development of forms of extra-ethnic culture which demand recognition of the inter-ethnic networks and commonalities in people's lives, while refusing (as far as is possible) to be restricted by the racist discourses of wider society (Back 1996).

That particular constructions of 'Blackness' may be appealing to the self-image of white young men highlights the way in which these 'cross-ethnic' cultures may be gendered (Back 1996). That the more common stereotypes of 'Asianness' may be less appealing – be it those for the Vietnamese (Back 1996) or Indo-Caribbean (Warikoo 2005); as 'effeminate' or 'fundamentalist' (Alexander 2004) – also suggests that this cross-ethnic cooperation may operate only along certain axes and with reference to more complex criteria. It is also possible that these restrictions interact with those of class as well as gender – middle-class and 'model minority' Asian stereotypes (Eckland 2005, Modood 2004) perhaps considered less accessible, if also less desirable, by these white working-class youth – a situation supported by the reduced acceptability of middle-class Black people in considerations of what constitutes “everyday” 'Blackness' by young people (Back 1996:154). Unfortunately, any enthusiasm for these fashions or for particular 'Black' people does not necessarily imply “any equivalent enthusiasm for the people that produce the culture in the first place” (Gilroy 1995:25): perhaps recognised in the situation whereby Black people might be considered “individually glamorous and attractive but at the same time...[people remain] fearful of them collectively” (Back 1996:172). Further:

Whilst the sports arena may provide access to hero worship, material wealth and personal liberation the stars that reap these rewards, both black and white, are performers reliant upon the patronage of, predominantly, Western white-dominated institutions and consumers.... ideas about racial differences become exemplified and projected onto the bodies of black athletes (Back *et al* 2001:5)

It does not follow, then, that this apparent individual power represents a real shift in attitudes towards, and therefore the fortunes of, the wider population of people from ethnic minority groups: “equality of opportunity is now a feature of every anodyne corporate mission statement but inequality is increasing. We certainly get to see more black people in the dreamscape of advertising, on television and the sports field though not in parliament, the police service or the judge’s bench” (Gilroy 2005:XXXIV).

So we must also be aware of how the meaning given to particular ‘ethnicities’ may shift more generally overtime. More than this, processes of globalisation mean that our relationships with our ‘identities’ may have fundamentally altered. Hall (1992) describes three concepts of identity: associated with the enlightenment subject (an individualistic form of identity centred around the self); the sociological subject (which I describe here, and recognises the interaction between the self and society in the mediation of values, meanings and symbols); and, following from this, the post-modern subject where process of identification become more variable. For this post-modern subject, the unstable and rapidly changing globalised environment – be it recognised in terms of international media or temporary or permanent international migration – encourages the constant re-examination of our social practices and relationships such that individual identities and group memberships no longer hold the consistency of the past: people may find mutuality in certain circumstances, and in respect of certain criteria, but they will not do so in others. The detachment associated with globalisation means therefore that the opportunities for imagined commonality are reduced – even while other similarities are recognised – and as a consequence an awareness of groupness is lost. This alters the hierarchical structure of an individual’s identities and enables them to recognise the interrelationship between them: people come to consider themselves as a sum of *all* their parts rather than having, for example, one aspect which is afforded ultimate significance. Through this new awareness of the variations in their interpersonal commonalities, then, individuals can recognise the potentially hybrid nature of their social self: including the way in which their ‘culture’ is influenced by those around them – including those from other social groups (Baumann 1996, 1999). Although the crisis associated with this erosion of the sense of group membership may produce resistance sufficient to promote action which actually strengthens them (such as the “aggressive little Englandism”, described by Hall 1992), suggesting that the relationship between globalisation and identity should not be considered clear-cut; allowing for this

hybridity may enable individuals to avoid the potential sense of cultural vacuum stemming from the reduced universality of their former allegiances.

So our definitions must recognise the influence of the other characteristics which make us 'who we are'. Individuals have a range of different characteristics (according to our age, gender, social class, ethnicity etc) which might form part of an individual's self-concept or group affiliation and from which, for the post-modern subject, it (at least appears) possible to choose – what Hall calls the “cultural supermarket” effect (1992:303) – and which locate us in our social context (Deaux *et al* 1995, Smaje 1996). At any one time we may define ourselves (or be defined) according to any (or all) of these characteristics, but our self concept and experience of any particular characteristic will be influenced by the others: being 'African American' may mean different things to young African American males than to older African American females, for example.

You cannot compartmentalise identity, split it up into halves, thirds or separate sections. I don't have several identities, I have a single one made up of all the elements that have shaped it, according to a particular 'mix' that is never the same for two people

(Maalouf, 1998, quoted in Ville and Guérin-Pace 2005)

And these definitions will also change over time and circumstance. But rather than this experience occurring in a social vacuum, the meaning and relative importance of each identity will be established in response to social transactions and internal and external perceptions, and will again vary according to the external audience. While the development and experience of a particular ethnicity will be influenced by other individual characteristics, however, there may also be commonalities regardless of these other characteristics: while an ethnic identity may be gendered, for example, there may also be similarities in the experience of that ethnic identification which override gender distinctions. Or, as the quotation from Barth (1969) above suggests, group membership may demand that certain variations are overlooked. Other individuals (who might be considered within the same social group, or outside it) may ensure a role for certain characteristics in ethnic definition at the expense of others, even when there is no personal motivation to define 'ethnicity' in this way.

So, there is a need to consider 'ethnicity' as a hybrid form of identification (Hall 1992, Modood 1998), which is influenced by internal and external attitudes and has the potential to continually change across contexts and over time. And to explore the “boundaries” and the “hierarchies” between groups, and the role of “relationality, naturalisation and collectivisation” in their construction (Anthias 2001:634), as well as the impact of context and location on its generation (Anthias 2002). Importantly, following from the arguments of Barth (1969), Weber

(1978), Jenkins (1997) and others, this notion of ethnicity emphasises the political process of ethnic affiliation at the expense of behavioural markers of ethnicity. Such ethnic affiliation could, of course, provide important symbolic and material resources which may directly affect socioeconomic or other forms of disadvantage. Therefore, while, for example, socioeconomic disadvantage might contribute to ethnic differences in social experience, there remains a cultural component to ethnicity which could also make a major contribution to these differences. Exploring such issues requires the development of more sensitive and more useful measures of ethnicity, which can allow us greater understanding of the relationship between ethnicity and other social and economic characteristics.

My intention in this thesis, then, is to clarify the ontological status of 'ethnicity'. But not so much in terms of what 'ethnicity' might consist of; more, following Barth (1969) and others, in terms of how, when and where the boundaries between ethnic groups are defined and what this means for the understanding of the relationship between structure and agency in the development of an appreciation of the influence of 'ethnicity' on your life. I do not seek to define what ethnicity is, or might be, and therefore hope to avoid the traps of essentialism. I believe 'ethnicity', following the ideas of Bourdieu (1977), can be expressed in a potentially infinite number of ways: it can be anything you, or anyone else, *believes* it to be. I do not begin from the supposition that assessments of 'ethnicity' address anything with essence – beyond the particular inter-relationships which create it at any particular time. However, I also seek to “move beyond the vacuous relativism that all experiences of ‘race’ and ethnicity are socially constructed and relational...to uncover the *specific* nature of the practices involved in producing particular forms of social difference at particular moments...[to move] towards detail of how difference is produced and has effects within specific sites, and towards an examination of how these forms of difference might be connected across very different social spaces and experiences” (Gunaratnam 2003:22). I also do not consider it *necessary* for an individual to (always) 'have' 'ethnicity'. But I recognise that, for some, this may be a position which is unattainable as a consequence of the reactions of those around them. Also, while it may be possible for each of us to *identify* with a particular 'ethnicity', or ethnic group, this may not necessarily constitute an *identity*. What I seek to explore is in what ways 'ethnicity' can be considered to be influential – including the subtleties unearthed in in-depth qualitative investigation as well as the more clumsy associations found within statistical analyses – and when, why and for whom these issues are important. How social dynamics and discourses construct, redefine and dissolve 'ethnicity' and the motivation underlying this, including the influence of lived experiences as well as differentials in the distribution of power among different social groups.

While a statistical analysis can do little to inform the generational process itself, it can highlight how far even cruder assessments of ‘ethnicity’ can provide insight into its complexities: hinting at the processes underlying them and also presenting ways in which such rigid, unsophisticated bureaucratic and epidemiological assessments can in themselves – at a nationally-representative level and in statistically recognisable ways – expose influences which go far beyond the ‘behaviours + genes’ assumptions which are frequently employed by their users, and also the potential ‘inter-ethnic’ similarities in these statistical representations of ethnic identification. It can therefore present ways in which it may be possible to both problematise inadequate racial and ethnic categories, and also work with them, without recourse to essentialism and its ideas of timeless, bounded and organic reality. Within this work is also contained an effort to destabilise ideas of normalised (non-Irish), homogenous and non-ethnic ‘whiteness’ – presenting means by which people who might be considered white (and non-Irish) may also recognise a form of ethnic identification. The quantitative analyses can also suggest ways in which these ‘ethnic’ influences may be affected by inclusion in other sociodemographic categories: exploring the potential limitations of assumptions regarding the ultimate importance and ongoing relevance of aspects of ethnic status, which suggest that that which makes someone ‘Black Caribbean’ is of meaning regardless of variation in the experiences of people considered in some way ‘Black Caribbean’. This can serve to highlight the heterogeneity in the classifications used as well as the homogeneity across them. But while a quantitative exploration can provide a sense of the potentially more global relevance of particular aspects of an appreciation of ‘ethnicity’, qualitative analyses can explore these contexts and subtleties more convincingly. While statistical analysis may suggest that ‘ethnicity’ may be experienced along a particular axis, qualitative analyses can address the interrelationship of this and other axes: such that they may be mutually reinforcing or contradictory: exploring variations in their impact on the recognition of ‘ethnicity’ and ‘inter-ethnic’ difference or similarity. What I hope to achieve is to both offer a means with which to deconstruct the categories used, whilst also exploring the experiences of being a member of a category, including the potentially positive opportunities that embracing a form of categorisation might provide.

## Background

This work stems from earlier analyses undertaken to explore the role of cultural differences, which may be seen to manifest from the role of ethnicity as a form of social identification, in the relationship between ethnicity and health (Karlsen and Nazroo 2000a, 2002a). These earlier analyses sought to determine underlying dimensions of ‘ethnicity’ among people with Caribbean, Indian and Pakistani and Bangladeshi<sup>1</sup> heritage, interviewed as part of the Fourth National Survey of Ethnic Minorities (FNS) (Modood *et al* 1997).

These earlier analyses (Karlsen and Nazroo 2000a, 2002a) suggested five components of ‘ethnicity’, related to: self-description (including one component related to the importance of a description based on nationality and one based on ‘ethnicity’ and skin colour); taking part in customs or holding attitudes which could be deemed ‘traditional’ to your ethnic group (including language, dress and attitudes to mixed marriage); participating in an ethnically-specific community; and being a member of a racialised group (a group whose social experience has caused their ethnicity to become politicised). The findings also suggested great similarity in the components of ethnicity across the different ethnic groups included; indicating that the structure of ‘ethnicity’ may be similar across ethnic minority groups in Britain. There was also great variation in individual component scores within particular ethnic groups for each dimension of ethnicity: reflecting the continuing relevance of the components as aspects of ethnic identification, even amongst those who might not be considered to conform to a particularly traditional manifestation of that ‘ethnicity’.

This earlier work has formed the basis of the analyses presented here. Questions were incorporated into the Ethnic Minority Psychiatric Illness Rates in the Community study (or EMPIRIC) questionnaire (Sproston and Nazroo 2002), used here, based on the components of ‘ethnicity’ identified from these earlier analyses, along with several other questions exploring respondents’ attitudes towards the situation of ethnic minority people in Britain today. The larger sample sizes in EMPIRIC also allow the Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups to be explored separately, providing additional insight into the complexities surrounding ethnic identification for different ethnic groups. Another important extension of this earlier work is the inclusion of additional ethnic groups. The FNS collected information only on non-white ethnic minority groups in Britain. EMPIRIC, however, also collected information from people with Irish ancestry and a white British ‘ethnic majority’ group. Exploring how far the similarities and differences in components of ‘ethnicity’ map onto those for white minority and majority groups will be particularly useful for the testing of theories about the process of ethnic affiliation among different ethnic groups in Britain today.

### White identities and the role of power

There are a number of reasons why it may be assumed that the processes of ethnic affiliation for majority groups may vary from those of minority populations. It has been reported, for example, that many 'ethnic majority' people do not perceive themselves as having an 'ethnicity' at all (Phinney 1992, Banks 1996, Mclean and Campbell 2003, Steck *et al* 2003), as a consequence of their numerical strength and social, economic or political power. The 'English', then, may not perceive a *need* for an ethnic community and therefore will not seek to develop an affiliation based on this: their status as the 'national' group enabling their culture to become normalised, such that people may not perceive themselves as having a 'culture', or culturally distinctive attributes. Unlike other groups, powerful ethnic groups are empowered to label themselves 'British' or 'American' without reference to their ethnicity, such that "the *visibility* of one's culture differs according to social status" (Perry 2001:61, see also Back 1996). This 'culturelessness' also means that demands for the assimilation of ethnic minority groups can be disguised under a call for cultural harmony.

This normalised culture therefore becomes the benchmark by which other groups are assessed as being more or less 'different': as a consequence, 'ethnicity' becomes in itself something 'exotic', a characteristic held by those from ethnic minority groups only. Research undertaken in America, Britain and Holland, for example (Perry 2001, Blokland 2003) shows that whiteness (for the powerful) means "never having to say you're 'ethnic'" (Perry 2001:56). As well as this culture being presented as the 'norm', it is also rationalised – promoted as developmentally advanced, but also naturally 'human' rather than related to any particular cultural preference. Perry (2001) found that among students at a predominantly white school, the normalisation of white culture produced feelings of cultural lack (unlike what they perceived among students from ethnic minority groups). This then might be considered both positively and negatively; one of McKinney's white students reporting themselves to be:

just white, just an American, just normal and just what society expects me to be... We have to fill these shoes, which can be quite stressful, and then we have to tip toe around races and ethnicities so that we don't step on their toes and discriminate against them (2003:47)

Suggesting that people from ethnic minority groups (non-Americans?) are free to live without the social proscription enforced on white, dominant 'normal' groups. And also that white Americans were further disadvantaged because people from ethnic minority groups were given "the benefit of the doubt the minute they cry 'racism' compared to when we do." (Pincus 2000:10). McKinney's respondents then voiced an opinion about the oversensitivity of people from ethnic minority groups regarding their experiences of racism, and their overzealous tendency to play the "race card" (2003:47). These perceived problems promoted a sense of a



politicised groupness: a connection to other white people, and a perceived need for collective action; although it did not necessarily follow that this required an appreciation of the cultural nature of their own habits. White students attending the ethnically-diverse school in Perry's (2001) study (or living in more ethnically-mixed areas, in the case of Back's (1996)) were more able, and willing, to reflect on their 'whiteness' as a social location. However, among Perry's respondents, a culturelessness was still perceived, and discussed using a form of rationalisation which subordinated 'culture': white culture was still considered a more 'natural' way of life.

Not being able to categorically identify elements of an 'English' or 'British' culture may be part of the problem of ascertaining it. This does not mean that there is no majority culture, however. As Perry points out:

White identity and culture is constructed in such a way that the values of individuality, personal responsibility, and a future-oriented self create a cognitive inability to see things any other way. A past orientation simply does not make sense to many whites from their cultural perspective. (2001:80)

But while 'others' (from ethnic minority groups) are seemingly unproblematically categorised, the culture of an ethnic majority group would seem to remain elusive. As Banks (1996) states in his description of Just's (1989) and Forsythe's (1989) work looking at ethnic majority culture in a number of European nation states: the "picture they present.... is of a kind of jellyfish identity, constantly wobbling and never quite fitting neatly into any rigid container" (Banks 1996:150). Despite this, national or 'majority'/powerful ethnic identities have parallels with other ethnic identities. They are based on a belief in common cultural symbols, histories and destinies and a national 'character' or 'folk', as well as being exposed to a constant redefining of boundaries in opposition to the group definition of others, albeit less acknowledged than for other groups (Hall 1992). But through their relationship with the state nationally dominant groups also have the power and authority to promote this nationalism, through the media and education systems (Banks 1996), which, under normal circumstances, will largely remove any sense of threat to that identity, and therefore any need to clearly define it. Unlike 'minority cultures' which are perceived by powerful white groups to require special attention and support to ensure their continuation, the strength of dominant cultures means that they do not: furthering this sense that it is nonexistent, and that 'ethnicity' is 'exotic'.

As with other forms of affiliation, dominant white ethnicities have been constructed, in opposition to an other (Miles 1989). The basis of 'whiteness' is seen to be in that which it is not: rational, intellectual and orderly rather than emotional, physical and chaotic. In times of social flux, maintenance of this identity, like others, is likely to require some conscious effort, which

might prove problematic in the absence of any explicit recognition of a culture to hold onto. As shown in the discussion of the political awareness of white groups, above, there is evidence of a new consciousness among members of white majority groups (Omi 1996), occurring in response to recent political, demographic and economic changes: such as policies related to affirmative action as well as the positive affirmation (and redefining) of 'ethnicity' by ethnic minority, particularly Black, groups (Pincus 2000, McKinney 2003). It is also argued that there is a crisis in 'white British' ethnicities, produced by the impact of globalisation, loss of empire, rapid social, economic and technical change, the strengthening of the European Union, devolution and the recently louder voice of multicultural Britain, as well as the 'threat of terrorism', which could be considered to have been promoted by the media as an assault on everything 'civilised' and 'rational' (and therefore 'white'). As suggested above, it may be argued, however, that this racialisation can occur independently of any ethnic or cultural identification: a sense of 'whiteness' developed as a reaction to the threat of other cultures around it, without necessarily requiring the development of an appreciation of the existence of its own (McKinney 2003).

We also need to recognise the potentially unique position of white minority groups, and why it is important to explore their experiences and processes of ethnic identification in addition to those of non-white minority and white 'majority' ethnic groups. In some respects the experience of white minority groups might be very different. Some people from white ethnic minority groups, particularly Irish people, explored here, will be able to maintain close connections with their families and friends in their 'homeland' compared with people from other ethnic minority groups, as a consequence of the shorter distances travelled during migration (Kelleher and Hillier 1996). In some senses this may be positive, not only because it may mean that people from such minority groups may not perceive the same threat (to themselves or their identity) as that perceived by those who cannot so readily return 'home' and escape the discrimination existing in, or processes of assimilation demanded by, the 'dominant culture'. It also means that people may not be encouraged to fully recognise themselves as being a part of (in this case) British/English society, and someone with a particular ethnic community related to this. Here, following Back, a 'community' does not need to be a "structurally defined social system or subsystem", but refers more "to the way communities are talked about and constructed" (1996:29) by those within, and outside of, them. It could also be argued that the reduced 'visibility' of white minority groups in Britain and other white-dominated societies means that people from white minority groups may be able to avoid some of the racist victimisation experienced by people from non-white ethnic minority groups. As a consequence their ethnic identity formation may exhibit similarities with those of more dominant white groups. It has also been argued that this 'whiteness' enables (particularly second generation) Irish people to distance themselves from things which emphasise their Irish identity and put them at risk for

victimisation (Ullah 1985). It has been recognised, however, that Irish people have, both historically and more currently, been the victims of discrimination (Hickman and Walter 1997) such that any 'protection' offered by assimilation is only limited.

A study by Hickman *et al* (2005) explored processes of identity formation among second-generation Irish people in England and Scotland. Respondents defined themselves as 'being English', 'not being English', 'being Irish', 'being half-Irish and half English/British' and 'being local'. It was apparent that people could consider any one, or more, of these labels applicable at any one time. The authors found a number of themes which arose when respondents were asked how they would define themselves, which may also have resonance with the appreciation of an 'ethnicity' among other ethnic groups. These included:

- the way that 'English' people refute respondents' choice of an 'Irish' (or not an 'English'/'British') label;
- the role of the comparison with other ethnic minority groups in label definition;
- the role of strategies for presenting the self to the external audience, and how this varies with context;
- references to sporting allegiances in determining affiliations;
- the role of the negative reactions of people in Ireland to people with English accents who claim to be Irish; and
- the impact of perceived 'ethnic' differences in upbringing.

Those who were English reported feeling less 'Irish' than other people, but also mentioned that in the presence of other Irish people they would mention their Irish heritage (Hickman *et al* 2005). Some of those who felt themselves to be '*not* English' were unhappy with the perceived generally xenophobic nature of 'English' people. Others had had direct experience of such negative treatment and this had affected their perception of their own ethnicity. Sometimes this position lead to the adoption of a 'local' identity – which was considered, by the authors, as possible evidence of “the exercise of privilege of being ‘white’ but the rejection of Englishness” (Hickman *et al* 2005:168). 'Irish' people also perceived cultural practices which they considered distinctly 'Irish', which they identified in certain social contexts, and which were marked by “accent, artefacts, habits, atmosphere, opinions, food, hospitality and sociability” (Hickman *et al* 2005:169). This perceived cultural difference lead to a need to establish places where 'Irishness' and a communal sense of belonging could be expressed. Aspects of these processes are likely to be similar to those described by people from, particularly, different ethnic minority groups in their development of an ethnic appreciation.

### 'Mixed' ethnicity: being "between two cultures"

Hickman *et al* (2005) also encountered a number of respondents who struggled with their ethnic identification, who felt that they were, in some senses, "*between two cultures*" (2005:171). In the Hickman *et al* (2005) study, this was a consequence of the perception that their 'ethnicity was influenced by both 'English' and 'Irish' culture: having an 'Irish' upbringing, but being born in England, for example. Those with a 'mixed' ethnic heritage as a consequence of an inter-ethnic parental relationship may also see themselves as being 'between cultures', and perhaps having particular issues in terms of ethnic identification.

The recognition of the presence of people with 'mixed' ethnic heritage promotes a move away from a sense of different ethnic groups forming distinct monolithic entities; although it also, of course, suggests that there are essentialised groups which have 'mixed' (Gilroy 1987). How far those with 'mixed' or 'Anglified' ethnicities might be allowed to express themselves as such is disputed, however. Burdsey (2004) describes how people who are perceived as 'hybrid' may not be considered 'authentic' by members of the particular ethnic groups to which they might have allegiance. And that people with hybrid identities may experience particular forms of negative treatment, both by the white British ethnic majority and by people from other minority groups (see also Tizard and Phoenix 1993). As an example, he describes an incident when Nasser Hussain, the Anglo-Pakistani captain of the England cricket team, expressed his disappointment that most of the British Pakistani supporters in the crowd during a match between the English and Pakistani national teams were supporting Pakistan – feeling that those who had been born or raised in Britain should feel able to support England. The media response was negative: he was perceived to be 'ignoring' his heritage; refusing to recognise what, it would seem, other people could clearly see. Ethnicity, for some, then, is still considered monolithic; such that those with even only 'one drop'<sup>2</sup> of non-white (British) ethnic heritage expected to conform to particular stereotypes and identities, or be labelled 'deluded' or 'confused': prompting, what Rockquemore calls, "the 'what are you really' question" (1998:206). They are, according to Ifekwunigwe, "compulsorily 'black'" (2002:335); although the responses of 'Black' people suggest that people with 'mixed' ethnic heritage will remain forever 'between' groups and never fully accepted in either (Tizard and Phoenix 1993).

Rockquemore (1998) and Rockquemore and Arend (2002) used in-depth interviews to explore the meaning of being 'biracial' for people with 'white' and 'African American' parentage. They found evidence for four expressions of biracial identity: a 'border' identity, a 'protean' identity, a 'transcendent' identity and a 'traditional' identity. Those with a 'border' identity did not feel themselves to be either 'Black' or 'white', but recognised their ethnicity as incorporating aspects of both: strictly (and uniquely) 'biracial'. While others could lay claims to being 'Black' or 'white', then, being 'biracial' also allowed a third aspect, that of being

‘inbetween’, which was described as enabling a particular insight into ‘Black’, ‘white’ and ‘mixed’ cultures. These respondents also expressed frustration at the use of bureaucratic categorisation – of being restricted to only one (usually non-white) label in their self-definition. A ‘protean’ identity enabled individuals to adopt different ethnic labels (as white, Black and biracial) as a consequence of their dual experiences, which they believed enabled them to identify with people from both Black and white groups. This encouraged an awareness of their ethnicity as part of a complex self, affected by multiple influences. Those with a ‘transcendent’ identity refuted the importance of ethnicity as an aspect of their self-concept. Those with a ‘traditional’ identity considered themselves to be simply ‘Black’ (or ‘white’, but not ‘biracial’). While they did not deny the existence of the parent who would not share this label, this aspect of their heritage was not considered salient for their self-perception (Rockquemore 1998). Access to a ‘white’ label was strictly controlled, however, and conferred according to (pale-skinned) physical appearance and social context (Rockquemore and Arend 2002). Again, it may be that these different forms of identity construction have relevance beyond these particular groups.

My PhD seeks to shed further light on the complex processes involved in the expression of ‘ethnicity’ among different ethnic groups. It is based on nationally representative quantitative data and a qualitative follow up of respondents to this initial survey, which I will use to explore the components of ethnicity which are considered salient by people traditionally categorised into different ethnic groups in England and how these components are patterned within and between groups, including to what extent there may be similarities in the expression of minority and majority ethnicities. I will also explore how ethnicity is perceived to play out in people’s lives – the meaning of particular labels and the role of your relationship with the people around you – including both those from your ‘own’ ethnic group and others.

My approach to the quantitative exploration of ethnic identity explores the multi-dimensional nature of ethnic identity. The data includes a number of questions that might be considered to reflect elements of ethnic identity relevant to the discussion above, including how far people’s behaviours and attitudes reflected cultural traditions and affiliation to an ethnic grouping, and how far their reported experiences and perceptions reflected being identified as a member of a particular ethnic group and reactions to this. Responses to these questions are used here to identify underlying components of ethnicity and to explore how these might vary within ethnic groups and might, or might not, vary across them, reflecting cultural diversity on the one hand and similarities in context on the other. These analysis will therefore enable important comment on the conceptualisation of ‘ethnicity’ among a large, representative sample of the largest ethnic groups in Britain, including the (statistical) impact of other demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. I will follow this using an approach which is less structured and therefore more

able to explore the complexities associated with this ethnic identification – as an individual and as part of a group – including the impact of the attitudes of and treatment by others. These qualitative analyses will enable an exploration of the meaning of ‘ethnicity’, in both a more abstract and an individual sense, and will investigate variations in the relative importance of particular aspects of the identification process, to provide a more nuanced understanding of ethnic identification than that available from the quantitative data.

## **Chapter 2      Methods**

### **Quantitative and qualitative sampling and data collection methods**

#### **Ethnic Minority Psychiatric Illness Rates in the Community (EMPIRIC) - quantitative phase.**

The findings presented here are based on secondary analysis of data collected as part of the EMPIRIC study (Sproston and Nazroo 2002). EMPIRIC was a follow-up to the Health Survey for England (HSE) 1999 (Erens *et al* 2001), which employed a representative survey of ethnic minority and white people living in England. Funded by the Department of Health, EMPIRIC was undertaken between 2000 and 2002 by a multicentre research team, including members from University College London; Queen Mary and Westfield College; Imperial, Exeter and Bristol Universities; and the National Centre *for* Social Research.

The HSE comprises a series of annual surveys designed to provide information on aspects of the population's health that cannot be obtained from other sources. The HSE 1999 was designed to provide data at both national and regional level about the population aged 2 and over living in private households in England, with special emphasis on the health of people affiliated to the largest ethnic minority groups: those with Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Irish and Chinese heritage. In the HSE 1999, people were allocated into an ethnic group using their responses to a question asking respondents "To which of these groups do you consider you belong?", with the options: 'White', 'Black – Caribbean', 'Black – African', 'Black – other Black groups', 'Indian', 'Pakistani', 'Bangladeshi', 'Chinese' and 'None of these'. The Irish group was defined using responses to the question: "were you or either of your parents born in Ireland?".

As with other surveys in the HSE series, a multi-stage stratified probability sampling design was employed. The sampling procedures were designed to select probability samples of both individuals and households. Sampling for each 'round' of the HSE involves a cross-section of the population drawn from the Postcode Address File. In the HSE 1999 the general population sample was set at around half of that of most previous years, to allow resources to be devoted to boosting the numbers of people from ethnic minority groups. For the ethnic minority group sample in HSE 1999, 408 postcode sectors were selected as primary sampling units. Postal sectors with fewer than 1000 delivery points were combined with adjacent sectors to avoid too tight a clustering of sampled addresses. Sampling points were identified using information from the 1991 Census (HMSO 1992), which allowed areas to be selected on the basis of the concentration of ethnic minority people within them. In order to ensure that the sample was fully representative, areas with low concentrations of ethnic minority people were identified and included. All postcode sectors in England were assigned to one of eight strata. The eight strata were defined as follows:

A-D      These four strata consisted of postcode sectors where at least ten per cent of the

resident population were from Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi groups, and:

- A where ten per cent or more of the resident population were Indian.
- B sectors that were not in stratum A, but where at least 5% of the resident population were Bangladeshi
- C sectors that were not in strata A or B, but where at least 2.5 per cent of the resident population were Pakistani
- D All other sectors meeting the ten per cent criteria, but not in strata A, B or C.
- E-F These two strata consisted of postcode sectors where at least one per cent (but less than ten per cent) of the resident population were from Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi groups, and:
  - E where one per cent or more of the resident population were Bangladeshi
  - F where less than one per cent or more of the resident population were Bangladeshi
- G This stratum consisted of sectors where less than one per cent of the resident population were from Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi groups, but at least 1.5 per cent of the resident population were Irish.<sup>3</sup>
- H All other postcode sectors not in strata A to G.

The number of postcode sectors selected for the ethnic minority sample in the HSE 1999 varied by stratum. Stratum H was not sampled, due to the reduced cost effectiveness of sampling in areas with such low concentrations of 'target' groups. Within strata A-G, postcode sectors were selected systematically, with each sector being given a probability of selection proportional to its total number of delivery points. The number of sectors selected from each stratum were: A 54, B 35, C 60, D 54, E 32, F 146, G 27. These postcode sectors were randomly allocated throughout the year to allow for season differences in reporting.

In postcode sectors allocated to strata A, B, C, D and G, interviewers were issued with a sample of addresses and required to contact each address to determine whether there were any residents eligible for inclusion in the survey. In sectors in strata E and F, which had a much lower density of residents from ethnic minority groups, screening for respondents was carried out in the field using a method known as focussed enumeration. Recruiters were issued with a sample of addresses which they screened for eligibility and also asked (at that address) about the ethnic origin of those living at the two addresses on each side of the sampled address. Therefore, up to five address were covered by each sampled address. If any of the adjacent addresses was thought to include residents from the relevant ethnic groups (or the contact was unsure) the interviewer made a personal visit to that address. Focussed enumeration has been shown to provide good coverage of the targeted populations (Brown and Ritchie 1982, Smith and Prior 1997). It was not used to identify people of Irish origin, however, who were determined only at



the sampled address. White (non-Irish) respondents were identified using a straightforward stratified sampling process, where areas, then addresses and then individuals within addresses were identified to be included in the study.

The EMPIRIC study included all respondents aged 16-74 who were interviewed as part of the HSE 1999, who agreed, during that interview, to be recontacted, from the Black Caribbean, Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and Irish groups. Chinese respondents were not included in the EMPIRIC study as that sample had already experienced two waves of attrition.<sup>4</sup> The white British group was subsampled from HSE 1998 respondents, as the general population questionnaire and measures for the HSE 1998 were very similar to those for the questionnaire used in HSE 1999. The response rates for the HSEs 1998 and 1999 and the quantitative phase of the EMPIRIC study are given in Table 1. The overall response rate for the EMPIRIC study was 68%.

**Table 1: Ethnic composition of respondents to the quantitative phase of the EMPIRIC study**

<b>Ethnic group</b>	<b>HSE* response rate (%)</b>	<b>HSE* respondents (N)</b>	<b>EMPIRIC response rate (%)</b>	<b>EMPIRIC respondents (N)</b>
White British	69	15908	74	835
Black Caribbean	55	2356	69	691
Indian	59	2179	64	648
Pakistani	60	2117	70	724
Bangladeshi	66	1657	70	650
Irish	65	1905	74	733

\* figures for the white British group are those for HSE 1998, those for the remaining groups are for HSE 1999.

Only respondents providing productive interviews at HSE and agreeing to be followed up were included in the EMPIRIC sample. As a consequence of this, the sample experienced two waves of non-response, at the HSE and at EMPIRIC. Adults from the sample drawn from HSE 1998 (who comprised the white sample at EMPIRIC) were not weighted at the HSE stage. This follows the standard approach in the HSE series not to weight the general population sample for variable non-response. Weighting at HSE 1999 was required for the ethnic minority group samples, however. To correct for the different probabilities of selection, three sets of weights were applied: the first to correct for the unequal probabilities of selection for postcode sectors; the second to correct for the varying probabilities of selection of addresses within postcode sectors; and the third to correct for the varying probabilities of selection of adults within households. These corrections were made by applying weights that were inversely proportional to the selection probabilities for the relevant postcode sectors, addresses and number of adults.

In addition, weights were applied to all cases to adjust for non-response at the follow-up stage, using data from the HSE. Logistic stepwise regression modelling was used to identify

significant predictors of non-response, using response to the study as the dependent variable and a number of HSE variables as independent variables. These included demographic, socioeconomic and health-related indicators as well as geographical area and household level characteristics. To identify (and correct for) different response patterns among different ethnic groups, interactions with ethnicity were also included in the model. The 'follow up' weight was the product of the reciprocal of the model-predicted probability of response for every respondent to the follow-up and the weight at the HSE stage. Each sample group was scaled by a constant factor to reflect its relative population size.

The data were collected using a structured questionnaire (see Appendix A). The interview schedule, and other survey materials, were translated into five South Asian languages (Hindi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu and Bengali). The interview was carried out in the language(s) in which the respondent was interviewed for the HSE. In situations where the interview was to be carried out in a language other than English, an interviewer who spoke the appropriate language was employed. No interpreters were used. The majority (83%) of interviews were carried out in English. Of the remaining, 14% were carried out in Bengali/Sylheti<sup>5</sup>, 6% were carried out in Punjabi and 2% in Urdu. That this total exceeds 100% reflects that some interviews were carried out in a combination of languages. On the whole, questions were taken from standardised instruments. Topics covered in the interview included: physical and mental health status; use of health services; social support; social networks; informal caring; control at work and home; the presence of chronic strains; social functioning; discrimination and harassment; and ethnic identity.

#### EMPIRIC - qualitative phase.

A subsample of those who took part in the EMPIRIC quantitative interview, and who gave their consent to be recontacted about future research, took part in a further in-depth interview, between October 2000 and March 2001 (O'Connor and Nazroo 2002). The sample was not chosen to be statistically representative, but to cover a range of sub-groups within the given population in order to identify and explain variations in the nature of experiences and views between them. The sample was purposively selected on the basis of a range of key characteristics identified as relevant to the given population. Fieldwork was relatively unclustered and took place in a variety of areas in England, including London and the Southeast, East Anglia, the East and West Midlands, Yorkshire and Lancashire. The qualitative interview was conducted to explore possible ethnic differences in the discussion of mental illhealth, and as such people were chosen who, in the quantitative interview, either exhibited symptoms of mental distress or reported potentially traumatic experiences. The implications of this are discussed in the 'Strengths and Limitations' section. The key variables included in the sample design were: gender, age, ethnic group, possible experience of mental distress<sup>6</sup>, migration

history and language interviewed in the survey. Interviews were carried out in the same language(s) as the quantitative interview. Any respondent preferences regarding the ethnicity or gender of the interviewer were also taken into account. Interviews were carried out in respondent's own homes and they were each paid £15 in appreciation of their time and help in taking part, as is usual with this type of research. All interviews were taped and transcribed. For interviews carried out in languages other than English, translation (and transcription) was undertaken by the interviewer in an attempt to minimise any loss of content or meaning.

All interviews were in-depth, exploratory and interactive in form, based on a topic guide that was developed by the research team (see Appendix B). This listed the key themes to be covered during the interview, and the subtopics within each to be explored. Interviews began by exploring with respondents current events in their life, such as housing, health, employment, family, relationship and household circumstances, and then went on to explore past experiences and hopes and plans for the future. The aim of the investigation was to determine whether there is any variation in the way in which people from different ethnic groups articulate their distress – which may be grounds for ethnic variations in mental illness. To these ends, the interviewer attempted to assess whether the respondent was experiencing, or had experienced, any form of mental distress. Where respondents identified potentially distressing episodes, the interviewer went on to explore the respondent's views about the origin and impact of that distress. The length of the interviews varied widely, from 30 minutes to over two hours. As part of this interview, people were asked to describe their ethnicity, and also about any experiences of racist victimisation.

It was intended that 20 people would be interviewed in each of six ethnic (Bangladeshi, Caribbean, Indian, Irish, Pakistani and white British) groups. Unfortunately, due to technical problems during some of the interviews, transcripts were only obtained for 116 people. The characteristics of the qualitative sample are shown in table 2. Slightly more women than men were interviewed, particularly among the Caribbean and South Asian groups. Achieving a diversity of migration experiences was difficult in some groups as the range of migration characteristics within groups was limited.

#### Ethics and consent

Ethical approval for EMPIRIC was obtained from the North Thames Multi-Centre Research Ethics Committee, and ratified by all the Local Research Ethics Committees in England. Potential respondents were sent an introductory letter (translated as appropriate, determined according to the language of the HSE) inviting them to participate in the study. This letter contained information about the study and the research group, and also included a telephone number to be used by those wishing to obtain further information, or to opt out of the study.

**Table 2: Characteristics of the qualitative sample in the EMPIRIC study**

	Cell counts						
	Ethnic group						
	White British	Irish	Black Caribbean	Bangladeshi	Indian	Pakistani	Total
Gender							
Male	8	8	9	9	7	8	49
Female	11	13	11	9	12	11	67
Age							
25-30	4	2	3	5	3	5	22
31-35	4	3	4	4	3	3	21
36-40	6	2	4	4	7	3	26
41-45	2	5	7	2	5	5	26
46-50	3	9	2	3	1	3	21
Age at migration							
Under 11 years	19	16	14	6	10	9	74
11 years or older	0	5	6	12	9	10	42
Survey identified mental distress	9	9	10	7	11	11	57
Survey did not identify mental distress	10	12	10	11	8	8	59
Language of interview							
Bengali	0	0	0	11	0	0	11
Bengali/English	0	0	0	2	0	0	2
Sylheti	0	0	0	1	0	0	1
Punjabi	0	0	0	0	4	1	5
Urdu	0	0	0	0	2	5	7
Urdu/English	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Pothari	0	0	0	0	0	5	5
Pothari/English	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Hindi/English	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
English	19	21	20	4	12	6	82
Religion							
Christian	7	7	11	0	0	0	25
Muslim	0	0	0	18	3	19	40
Sikh	0	0	0	0	5	0	5
Hindu	0	0	0	0	6	0	6
Buddhist	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
Rastafarian	0	0	2	0	0	0	2
None	12	13	7	0	5	0	37
Social class							
Manual	6	5	9	8	7	9	44
Non-Manual	13	16	10	3	12	4	58
Not applicable*	0	0	1	7	0	6	14
Marital status							
Married	11	13	6	15	15	15	75
Divorced/Separated	1	5	4	2	2	2	16
Widowed	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
Single	7	3	10	1	2	1	24

\* This includes those who had never had paid employment, and therefore could not be coded into an occupational class

Before participating in any (and each) phase of data collection, respondents were reminded that their participation was entirely voluntary and that they could refuse to take part, or terminate the interview at any point if they so wished. They were also reminded that their identity would remain confidential, that their name, address and other identifiable information would not be linked to the data obtained, or used in any reporting. Written consent was not sought. The respondent's voluntary participation in the survey was considered indication of their consent. It was felt that obtaining formal written consent before the interview may cause the respondent to feel under obligation to complete the interview. Before the qualitative interview, interviewers sought further consent from respondents regarding their involvement in the study, and for their interview to be tape recorded. Respondents were assured that no-one outside of the research team would have access to the tapes or transcripts.

#### EMPIRIC - my contribution

I was involved in all stages of both the quantitative and qualitative phases of the EMPIRIC study. I was involved in developing the study design and oversaw the obtaining of ethical approval for the study. I was part of the team which developed the structured (quantitative) questionnaire, taking particular responsibility for the development of the sections exploring ethnic identity and racial discrimination and harassment, which have been employed here. The decision to use the particular questions in these sections was based on my secondary analysis of the FNS (described earlier and in Karlsen and Nazroo 2000a, 2002a). I also oversaw the translation of the various documents employed (including the questionnaire) into Hindi, Gujarati, Punjabi, Urdu and Bengali. While I was not directly involved in the quantitative data collection in the field, I was involved in the briefing, debriefing and advising of the large team of interviewers conducting the quantitative data collection; leading some of these sessions. I was part of the small team (of four) which constructed the statistical weights for these data and also conducted and wrote up a significant part of the data analysis, contributing three of the nine chapters to the final quantitative report (Sproston and Nazroo 2002).

I was also part of the small team (of six) which devised the qualitative sampling strategy and developed the topic guide to be used in the in-depth follow-up interviews. I personally conducted 16 of these interviews, across the country. This same small team developed the thematic framework for the qualitative analysis,<sup>7</sup> conducted and crosschecked the analysis and interpretation of the findings and wrote the qualitative report (O'Connor and Nazroo 2002). Being such an integral member of the original research team has been invaluable for the conduct of the research. As well as allowing me access to the qualitative data in a way which does not contravene the consents secured during data collection, I have a clear understanding of the context in which the original study was undertaken, and the motivation behind it. There are a

number of issues which arise from this methodological process, on which I shall reflect in more depth in the 'Strengths and Limitations' section of this thesis.

### **Quantitative analysis of processes of ethnic identification**

A series of principal components analyses (Duntzman 1989) were conducted to investigate the existence of definitional components of 'ethnicity' that might encourage a form of identification. This technique is used to identify components that can be considered to represent correlations among sets of inter-related variables. As well as a formal method for ascertaining underlying component structure, principal component analysis can be used as a heuristic device (Duntzman 1989), and it is perhaps more in this mode that I employ it here. As I have shown, anthropological and sociological theory (particularly) suggests that ethnicity may be perceived as consisting of a number of dimensions: involving external labelling and internal definition, a lived and learnt experience and reactions to each. Based on exploration of the literature, and supported by the findings of my earlier analyses (Karlsen and Nazroo 2000a, 2002a), the principal component analyses concentrated on questionnaire items relating to how far reported experiences and perceptions reflect being identified in terms of an ethnic group and reactions to this. More specifically, the questions included in the analyses explored:

- how often, and under what circumstances people wore clothes which signified an attachment to a particular ethnic group;
- whether and to whom people spoke languages other than English;
- to what extent people felt they would be concerned about a close relative entering into an ethnically-mixed marriage;
- whether people were involved in work with organisations focussed on their ethnic community;
- whether people had been the victim of racist harassment, violence or discrimination;
- whether and to what extent people perceived British employers to be racist in their recruitment practices;
- whether and to what extent people thought of themselves as being 'British' and 'Bangladeshi', 'Indian', 'Pakistani', 'Irish' and 'Black Caribbean'; and
- whether and to what extent people were concerned that 'traditional' lifestyles were being replaced by those of 'white' or English groups.

Further details of these questions are included in Chapter 3.

The questions were taken from the FNS, and were, on the whole, the same as those used in the previous analyses, described above (Karlsen and Nazroo 2000a, 2002a). This was with the exception of the questions exploring the extent to which respondents felt people from ethnic minority groups were being (and should be) assimilated into the 'majority' culture in Britain, which were also taken from the FNS but were unavailable for the earlier analyses due to the

nature of the data collection in the FNS.<sup>8</sup> Some questions were adapted to enable their use with the Irish and 'white' majority groups, details of which will also be given in Chapter 3.

Responses to these questions are used to investigate statistically whether there might be considered to be underlying dimensions of ethnicity which are influential for ethnic identification and to explore how these components might vary within and between ethnic groups, defined according to the measures used in the HSE: reflecting cultural diversity on the one hand and similarities in definitional context on the other. These data also provide important validation for the qualitative analyses, triangulation which is considered particularly important for the secondary analyses of qualitative data (Le Roux and Vidal 2000).

These analyses were conducted first for each ethnic group separately, then for all of the ethnic minority groups combined. As not all of the questions included in the principal component analyses were asked of the white British group, they could not be included in an all-ethnic-group model. Using these analysis it is possible to explore both potential differences in dimensions of ethnic identification between the different ethnic groups (that is, how far separate analyses for each ethnic group produces different dimensions of ethnic identification) and to examine differences in scores on particular components between ethnic groups, using dimensions determined using a joint principal component analysis.

The principal components method of factor extraction produces components in sequence according to the amount of the total sample variance they account for. The total variance explained by each component is called the eigenvalue. This analysis reports only components with an eigenvalue of one or over (Dunteman 1989), as those with an eigenvalue lower than one is no more explanatory than a single variable. In each of these analyses, this decision was also supported by the scree plot which, in each case, suggested that little additional variance would be explained by the inclusion of additional components. Principal components analysis was followed by oblique rotation to allow for correlation between the different components identified. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients give results from tests of correlation between the most highly loading variables clustering under the different components. Individual respondents were allocated a score for each of the components identified using the coefficients determined during the analyses. Investigation of the Pearson product-moment correlation was undertaken to explore correlation between scores on the different components.

Finally, to explore the relationship between these components of ethnic identification and other potential influences on the recognition of forms of ethnic affiliation, a linear regression analysis was performed separately for each component and for each of the ethnic groups included, using the individual component scores determined by the analyses conducted for each (HSE-defined) ethnic group separately. The characteristics included were: age (entered as a

continuous variable), gender, age of migration, household occupational class, housing tenure, economic activity, equivalent class of highest British or overseas qualification, a measure of urbanisation and a measure of the ethnic mix of residents in the area. These latter variables were determined by the interviewers according to their perception of the local area while in the field, rather than being asked of respondents directly or determined from more formal sources. Further details of these indicators are also included in Chapter 3.

Current employment status was coded 'employed', 'unemployed', 'non-employed' (those in education, retired or sick) and those who were 'looking after the home'. Household social class was coded according to the occupation of the head of household using the Registrar General's classification of occupations (OPCS 1991): where

- social class I includes 'professional' occupations such as accountants, engineers and doctors;
- social class II includes 'managerial', 'technical, and 'intermediate' occupations such as marketing and sales managers, teachers, journalists and nurses;
- social class III<sub>n</sub> includes 'non-manual skilled' occupations such as clerks, shop assistants and cashiers;
- social class III<sub>m</sub> includes 'manual skilled' occupations such as carpenters, drivers, joiners and cooks;
- social class IV includes 'partly skilled' occupations such as security guards, machine tool operators and farm workers; and
- social class V includes 'unskilled' occupations such as labourers and cleaners.

Social classes I and II, and IV and V were combined for this analysis. In the HSE, the head of household is defined as the household member who owns or rents the property, or the man married to or cohabiting with the woman who is the owner/renter of the property. Where there are equal claims to be the head of household, males take precedence over females and older people take precedence over younger people.

### **Qualitative analysis of processes of ethnic identification**

As mentioned earlier, respondents were asked about their ethnic background during the qualitative interview. The depth of the discussion varied, however. As a result of this only 47 respondents provided information suitable for in-depth qualitative analysis. Details of this population are shown in table 3.

These 47 transcripts were investigated using a content analysis method developed for use with qualitative research data called 'Framework' (Richie and Spencer 1994, Richie and Lewis 2003). 'Framework' involves a cross-sectional code and retrieve method which allows the



systematic and comprehensive analysis of verbatim material within a thematic matrix: enabling the researcher to synthesise a large volume of qualitative data in an organised manner into a manageable form, while retaining its depth. A thematic framework is used to classify and organise the data according to a number of key themes, concepts and emergent categories. First, key topics and issues emerging from the data are identified through familiarisation with the interview transcripts, which ensures that the analysis remains grounded in the raw data. Second, a conceptual framework of recurrent themes is devised, which are then sorted and grouped into a smaller number of broader, high order categories. Each of these high order categories provides the basis for a thematic chart. Each thematic chart is divided into subtopics, along with the inclusion of miscellaneous columns to allow flexibility in the analysis as well as the inclusion of additional data whose potential importance for the analysis is yet to be established during these early stages. Data from each transcript is then summarised according to this framework, using one row for each case. The organisation of the data in this way enables both within and between case exploration. The analyst may explore thematic categories and patterns across different cases, associations between phenomena within a single case and also associations in phenomena between groups of cases. This method also enables material to be assigned to multiple locations within the framework. Here, I worked systematically through each transcript in turn, dealing with each theme as it arose, rather than exploring a single theme at a time. This enabled me to retain a clear sense of the complexity of individual narratives.

The language of the respondent is retained in the summary in the form of verbatim quotations and the page of the transcript is noted on the chart, allowing the researcher to return to the full transcript to explore a point in more detail or to extract further text for more extensive quotation. This ensures that, while the data can be organised into related blocks, links to the original data are retained. Key terms, phrases and expressions are retained using the participant's own language, and interpretation is kept to a minimum. This prevents the evidence becoming too abstracted and concentrated around the established themes, which produces a loss of flexibility in the analysis. Space is also allocated for the inclusion of important background information, providing balance between the detail and context of the evidence. The organisation of the data in this manner enables the views, circumstances and experiences of all respondents to be explored within a common analytical framework that is both grounded in and driven by their own accounts. The thematic charts allow for the full range of views and experiences to be compared and contrasted both across and within cases; and for patterns and themes to be identified and explored. Cases can be grouped and regrouped according to emergent themes and key analytical variables. Importantly, this approach also allows transparency, offering the opportunity for individuals to review the process of an analysis, including the interpretation undertaken, in addition to its final outputs. It also enables the analyst to develop a deep

familiarisation with the evidence available, and a full and detailed picture of what should be portrayed later in the analysis.

The process of actually writing a summarised or synthesised account begins to trigger the vital insights into, or question about, the data that will lead to the later interpretative stages of analysis. Only by working through the raw material at this level of intensity do the lines of enquiry to pursue, or the puzzles posed by the data begin to emerge. The time invested is therefore worth every moment since the 'jewels' that await the analyst will certainly begin to glimmer (Richie and Lewis 2003:223)

This final stage involves classificatory and interpretive analysis of the charted data in order to identify patterns of association and other regularities, or irregularities. The aim of this stage of the analysis is to develop a set of descriptive categories from the synthesised text. Over a number of revisions, a more abstracted classification is developed, as higher level categories begin to emerge and a process of conceptual interpretation begins, to produce a descriptive map of the issue under investigation. This enables the development of potential explanations and the generation of hypotheses for the patterns detected.

After familiarising myself with the transcripts I developed six main themes, each of which formed the basis of a chart. The first theme provides a general sense of the respondent's appreciation of their 'ethnicity', and their ethnic label use. Within this chart, I explore how respondents describe their ethnicity and ethnic affiliation, their place of birth and religious and spiritual beliefs, the language the interview was conducted in, and where available other languages the respondent speaks. I also include a summary of their migration history, as well as details of what customs respondents appeared to consider to be 'traditional' to members of their 'own' ethnic group or others. I also include here important background information, including their current economic activity, income and housing, their household composition and other demographic characteristics. During my analysis, I have also explored the impact of the approach to the question of ethnicity and ethnic background – including the particular question employed in the interview and the potential influence of the preceding discussions, particularly whether ethnicity was spontaneously mentioned by the respondents and whether the discussion of ethnicity was preceded by discussion of more or less positive issues, especially the potential impact of any discussion of experiences or perceptions of racism and racist victimisation. The second chart explores respondents' migration history in more depth – including migration within the UK as well as movements to and from the UK. This chart includes information on the respondents' migration status – including when and why these movements were made and by whom (whether they were accompanied by their family, for example) and the various areas and countries of residence.

**Table 3: Characteristics of the population included in the qualitative analyses, by ethnic group.**

	Cell counts						
	white British	Irish	Black Caribbean	Ethnic group Bangladeshi	Indian	Pakistani	Total
<b>Gender</b>							
Male	4	4	4	3	3	5	23
Female	0	8	6	3	5	2	24
bases	4	12	10	6	8	7	47
<b>Age</b>							
25-29	1	1	2	1	1	2	8
30-34	1	3	2	2	1	0	9
35-39	0	1	3	2	4	3	13
40-44	0	2	3	1	0	1	7
45-49	2	5	0	0	2	1	10
bases	4	12	10	6	8	7	47
<b>Age at migration</b>							
Born in GB	4	8	8	1	2	3	26
Under 11	0	1	1	1	4	0	7
Between 11 and 16	0	0	1	1	1	2	5
Over 16	0	3	0	3	1	2	9
bases	4	12	10	6	8	7	47
<b>Social class</b>							
Non-manual	3	11	5	0	7	1	27
Manual	1	1	4	4	1	5	16
Never employed	0	0	1	2	0	1	4
bases	4	12	10	6	8	7	47
<b>Economic activity in the past week</b>							
Fulltime education	0	0	1	0	0	0	1
In paid employment	4	8	6	2	6	3	29
Unemployed	0	2	0	1	1	2	6
Looking after home	0	1	3	2	1	2	9
Doing something else	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
bases	4	12	10	5	8	7	46
<b>Highest educational qualification gained</b>							
Degree or higher	3	5	0	1	4	0	13
Higher education	1	2	1	0	0	1	5
A level or equivalent	0	2	1	0	1	0	4
GCSE or equivalent	0	2	3	1	1	3	10
Below GCSE	0	0	1	0	1	0	2
None	0	1	4	4	1	3	13
bases	4	12	10	6	8	7	47
<b>Urbanisation of local area</b>							
Inner city	0	3	3	5	2	2	15
Other dense							
urban/Town centre	0	3	2	1	1	2	9
Suburban residential	3	5	5	0	4	3	20
Rural	1	0	0	0	0	0	1
bases	4	11	10	6	7	7	45
<b>Ethnic mix of residents in local area</b>							
Predominantly white	3	6	1	0	2	0	12
Predominantly ethnic							
minority	0	1	1	3	1	3	9
Mixed	1	5	8	3	5	4	26
bases	4	12	10	6	8	7	47

This chart also explores personal and familial experiences since the move(s), including experiences of racial discrimination and harassment. This chart also includes information exploring respondents' attitudes towards a 'homeland', where appropriate. (See 'Terminology' for more discussion of this.)

The third theme explores respondents' appreciation of the influence of their 'ethnicity' on their social roles, including how far they might consider themselves to be a member of an 'ethnic' (or ethnically-specified) group, and an ethnically-specific community. It also explores the impact of other aspects of your identity on your understanding and experience of life as a member of a particular ethnic group. This chart also explores the perceived location of any ethnic group or community: particular whether it is predominantly UK-based or whether there are important links with people living elsewhere. The fourth chart similarly explores the ways in which 'ethnicity' is perceived to impact on the lives of respondents: including how far people's lives may be considered 'ethnically specified'; their attitudes towards people considered members of other ethnic groups; and their understanding of their treatment by others. Finally, chart five explores more specifically the experience of being a member of an ethnic minority group in the UK. Under this theme are explored ideas of ethnic difference, what it means to be 'British' and/or 'English', and how these may differ from each other, and from being 'Irish', 'Welsh', 'Scottish' or 'European' (for example). It also includes information relating to the impact of being a member of an ethnic minority, as opposed to an ethnic majority, group in Britain and how being a member of a particular ethnic group might vary by location, particularly how the experience of being, for example, 'Pakistani' in the UK might vary from that of Pakistani people in Pakistan.

As mentioned above, one of the opportunities presented by using a framework format for these analyses is that charts can be reorganised according to key dimensions to allow easier exploration of the impact of particular characteristics. These data were reorganised using both the ethnic group identifier used for the initial screening, described above, and also to account for those respondents who had classified in one way during the HSE and another way when asked by interviewers during the qualitative phase of data collection, as well as by age, gender, age at migration (including those born in the UK) and religious affiliation. A further opportunity provided by these data came from the linking of respondents' responses to the quantitative and qualitative phases. This allowed the charts to also be reorganised by importance of religion, social class, economic activity, highest qualification gained, housing tenure and the urbanisation and ethnic mix of the local area. I have also included details of five of the interviews as biographies to enable an improved appreciation of the depth of the data collected, particularly in terms of the development of ethnic identities through the respondents' personal accounts of their

lives and experiences. The narratives were selected according to their ability to display the interrelationships between different manifestations of 'ethnicity'.

I also wished to investigate the effect of the ethnicity of the interviewer on the way people described their ethnicity (Gunaratnam 2003). To these ends, I asked each of the interviewers to apply their own ethnic labels to themselves: both in terms of how they perceived themselves and how someone else (both someone with the 'same' ethnic affiliation and not) would perceive them. I then explored how respondents talked about their ethnicity in light of these characteristics, exploring whether the discussions of people in particular ethnic groups varied with the ethnicity of the interviewer.

### Terminology

For simplicity, discussions of respondents' use of ethnic labels are divided into two broad groups: labels are more, or less, 'radical'. In keeping with other work employing this concept (Thornton, Taylor and Brown 2000), less radical labels are those which could be considered less controversial in terms of the attitudes of the powerful groups in wider British society: addressing a geographically-based sense of heritage, and tending to conform to those categories used in the census measures. South Asian people using less radical labels, therefore, would consider themselves, for example, as 'Bangladeshi', 'Pakistani' or 'Indian', and in some cases 'Asian', rather than 'Anglo Indian'. Black Caribbean people using less radical labels would consider themselves 'Afro' or 'African' 'Caribbean', rather than 'Black' or 'Black British'. Labels such as 'Anglo Indian', 'Black' and 'Black British' are, here, considered labels which have been 'Anglified', and affected in some way by life in Britain. In the discussion of the qualitative findings, the phrase 'Asian' is sometimes used in preference to 'South Asian' as this is a phrase more frequently employed by respondents. This issue is simplified by the exclusion from the data collection of other groups which could also be considered 'Asian', such as Chinese groups. In general, the term 'British' is prioritised over the term 'English'.

The term 'homeland' is used to refer to a country to which respondents may – now or in the past – held former citizenship. This 'homeland' may constitute a respondent's place of birth, an ancestral 'home', or somewhere where a respondent may have imagined links to, even without ever having visited that place. This phrase, in my opinion, allows for a psychological attachment to a place to exist independent of any actual physical lived experience, and to allow for a fluidity in the relationship between an individual and their homeland in a way which phrases such as 'country of origin' can not.

An 'ethnic community' is considered to be a group which constitutes members of *your own* (perceived) ethnic group. 'Same-ethnic' or 'ethnically-specific' communities refers to groups which include people who could be considered to be members of the same ethnic group.

Each quotation is labelled to indicate the serial number, ethnic background, gender, age and age at migration to Britain (GB) of the respondent. The ethnic identifier used employs the category selected by the respondent from the options provided by the HSE screening question, from which respondents were classified into an ethnic group (described above).

### **Chapter 3      Quantitative exploration of dimensions of ethnic identification**

This chapter describes the quantitative exploration of components of ethnicity. The first stage of this exploration sought to establish the potential for identifiable dimensions of ethnicity which might be employed as a means to establish a form of ethnic identification, using principal components analyses. This aspect of the analyses was conducted in two steps: with principal components analyses conducted first for each ethnic group separately (including the white British group) and then repeated, combining all respondents from the different ethnic minority groups sampled. This enabled the exploration of similarities and differences in the methods employed in the recognition of ethnicity between the different ethnic groups along two axes. Variations in the loadings of different variables in the principal components analyses for separate ethnic groups were used to assess the extent to which certain aspects of ‘ethnicity’ might be more or less meaningful to people in different ethnic groups: to the extent that ‘ethnicity’ might be considered to compose of a number of different components which may be considered useful for the establishment of an ‘ethnic’ affiliation and the extent that subtle variations in the meaning of particular components may exist across groups. Individual scores derived from these combined analyses were also employed to investigate between-group differences in the particular dimensions determined using the all-ethnic-minority-groups principal components model to assess whether there were group-specific variations in scores on particular dimensions. The individual scores derived from the separate ethnic minority group models were also employed during multivariate analyses undertaken to examine how other demographic and socioeconomic characteristics may influence an individual’s recognition of the relevance of a particular aspect of ‘ethnicity’. These analyses are described in the following sections, after a description of the distributions of the variables included in the principal components analyses by ethnic group.

#### **Identification of dimensions of ethnic identity**

##### **Distributions**

Table 4 shows distributions of the variables included in the analyses by ethnic group, assessed using the quantitative measures of ethnic background used in the HSE. A higher proportion of people from the Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi groups reported holding concerns about ethnically-mixed marriages, wearing clothes to convey a particular ethnic affiliation and speaking languages other than English, compared with white British, Irish and Caribbean people. Around two-fifths of people in the Irish group said they thought of themselves as being ‘Irish’, compared with the three-quarters of people with Black Caribbean heritage who said they thought of themselves as being ‘Caribbean’, and over four-fifths of people from the Indian, Bangladeshi and Pakistani groups who said they thought of themselves as being ‘Indian’, ‘Bangladeshi’ or ‘Pakistani’ respectively. Over ninety percent of Bangladeshi respondents said they thought of themselves as being ‘Bangladeshi’. At least two-thirds of

**Table 4: Distribution of variables included in the principal component analyses, by ethnic group.**

	Per cents						
	Ethnic group						
	white British	Irish	Black Caribbean	Bangladeshi	Indian	Pakistani	Total
<b>Would you personally mind if a close relative were to marry a person who was not from your own ethnic group?</b>							
Not at all	87	100	95	44	69	52	75
A little	7	0	3	21	14	14	9
Very much	6	0	2	34	17	34	15
<i>weighted bases</i>	<i>820</i>	<i>731</i>	<i>677</i>	<i>635</i>	<i>639</i>	<i>710</i>	<i>4212</i>
<i>unweighted bases</i>	<i>822</i>	<i>730</i>	<i>681</i>	<i>637</i>	<i>636</i>	<i>711</i>	<i>4217</i>
<b>Where do you wear Asian clothes, or something that is meant to show a connection with the Caribbean or Africa?</b>							
Nowhere	-	100	75	17	32	8	58
Social events	-	0	0	1	5	2	1
At home	-	0	15	20	23	25	13
At work or shopping	-	0	0	14	18	22	9
All the time	-	0	10	47	21	43	19
<i>weighted bases</i>	-	<i>733</i>	<i>686</i>	<i>643</i>	<i>644</i>	<i>719</i>	<i>4260</i>
<i>unweighted bases</i>	-	<i>733</i>	<i>690</i>	<i>640</i>	<i>638</i>	<i>720</i>	<i>4258</i>
<b>Who do you speak to in a language other than English?</b>							
Not answered	100	1	1	0	1	0	20
Noone	0	94	86	1	6	2	31
Family only	0	1	3	9	18	15	7
Friends outside work	0	3	7	72	52	62	31
Workmates	0	2	3	18	22	21	10
<i>weighted bases</i>	<i>835</i>	<i>733</i>	<i>691</i>	<i>650</i>	<i>648</i>	<i>723</i>	<i>4280</i>
<i>unweighted bases</i>	<i>837</i>	<i>733</i>	<i>694</i>	<i>650</i>	<i>643</i>	<i>724</i>	<i>4281</i>
<b>To what extent do you agree with the statement: in many ways I think of myself as Asian/Irish/Caribbean?</b>							
Strongly disagree	-	14	5	1	2	2	5
Disagree	-	21	6	1	3	3	7
Neither agree nor disagree	-	21	11	5	10	9	12
Agree	-	24	38	51	48	42	40
Strongly agree	-	19	39	43	37	44	36
<i>weighted bases</i>	-	<i>731</i>	<i>685</i>	<i>649</i>	<i>648</i>	<i>723</i>	<i>3436</i>
<i>unweighted bases</i>	-	<i>731</i>	<i>688</i>	<i>649</i>	<i>643</i>	<i>723</i>	<i>3434</i>
<b>To what extent do you agree with the statement: in many ways I think of myself as British?</b>							
Strongly agree	57	43	34	22	21	26	35
Agree	30	32	37	45	44	44	38
Neither agree nor disagree	7	8	15	19	19	17	14
Disagree	4	9	10	7	13	11	9
Strongly disagree	2	8	4	7	4	3	5
<i>weighted bases</i>	<i>832</i>	<i>732</i>	<i>685</i>	<i>650</i>	<i>648</i>	<i>723</i>	<i>4270</i>
<i>unweighted bases</i>	<i>835</i>	<i>731</i>	<i>689</i>	<i>649</i>	<i>643</i>	<i>722</i>	<i>4269</i>



	Ethnic group						
	white British	Irish	Black Caribbean	Bangladeshi	Indian	Pakistani	Total
<b>To what extent do you agree with the statement: ethnic minority people should try to preserve as much as possible of their culture and way of life?</b>							
Strongly disagree	2	1	1	0	1	1	1
Disagree	8	8	4	2	5	5	5
Neither agree nor disagree							
disagree	26	32	20	11	15	13	20
Agree	36	36	39	48	47	43	41
Strongly agree	27	24	35	39	33	39	33
<i>weighted bases</i>	<i>826</i>	<i>730</i>	<i>685</i>	<i>648</i>	<i>645</i>	<i>722</i>	<i>4256</i>
<i>unweighted bases</i>	<i>829</i>	<i>729</i>	<i>688</i>	<i>647</i>	<i>641</i>	<i>721</i>	<i>4255</i>
<b>To what extent do you agree with the statement: ethnic minority people should adopt more the culture and way of life of white people?</b>							
Strongly agree	10	4	7	6	6	5	6
Agree	23	20	19	22	27	24	22
Neither agree nor disagree	35	42	34	43	38	30	37
Disagree	28	26	30	19	24	32	27
Strongly disagree	5	8	11	11	6	8	8
<i>weighted bases</i>	<i>827</i>	<i>730</i>	<i>681</i>	<i>644</i>	<i>642</i>	<i>712</i>	<i>4236</i>
<i>unweighted bases</i>	<i>830</i>	<i>728</i>	<i>683</i>	<i>644</i>	<i>640</i>	<i>712</i>	<i>4237</i>
<b>To what extent do you agree with the statement: ethnic minority people are seeing their way of life and culture being replaced by the culture of white people?</b>							
Strongly disagree	6	6	6	8	3	5	6
Disagree	29	31	31	17	22	21	26
Neither agree nor disagree	28	40	34	40	23	22	31
Agree	29	21	21	29	45	48	32
Strongly agree	7	2	8	6	7	4	6
<i>weighted bases</i>	<i>827</i>	<i>721</i>	<i>677</i>	<i>640</i>	<i>640</i>	<i>707</i>	<i>4212</i>
<i>unweighted bases</i>	<i>830</i>	<i>721</i>	<i>680</i>	<i>641</i>	<i>638</i>	<i>708</i>	<i>4218</i>
<b>Have you ever been a victim of a racially motivated attack (be it verbal or a physical attack to the person or property)?</b>							
No	93	93	85	91	87	87	90
Yes	7	7	15	9	13	13	10
<i>weighted bases</i>	<i>835</i>	<i>733</i>	<i>691</i>	<i>650</i>	<i>648</i>	<i>724</i>	<i>4281</i>
<i>unweighted bases</i>	<i>837</i>	<i>733</i>	<i>694</i>	<i>650</i>	<i>643</i>	<i>724</i>	<i>4281</i>
<b>Have you ever been refused a job for reason which you think were to do with your race, colour or your religious or ethnic background?</b>							
No	96	93	64	92	81	84	85
Yes	4	7	36	8	19	16	15
<i>weighted bases</i>	<i>835</i>	<i>733</i>	<i>691</i>	<i>650</i>	<i>648</i>	<i>724</i>	<i>4281</i>
<i>unweighted bases</i>	<i>837</i>	<i>733</i>	<i>694</i>	<i>650</i>	<i>643</i>	<i>724</i>	<i>4281</i>
<b>What proportion of British employers do you think would refuse a job to a person because of their race, colour, religion or ethnic background?</b>							
None	14	15	11	65	36	36	28
A few	68	71	54	24	43	43	52
About half	16	13	27	9	17	15	16
Most	3	2	8	2	4	5	4
<i>weighted bases</i>	<i>805</i>	<i>698</i>	<i>652</i>	<i>610</i>	<i>615</i>	<i>669</i>	<i>4049</i>
<i>unweighted bases</i>	<i>807</i>	<i>696</i>	<i>657</i>	<i>611</i>	<i>614</i>	<i>676</i>	<i>4061</i>

	Ethnic group						
	white British	Irish	Black Caribbean	Bangladeshi	Indian	Pakistani	Total
<b>In your voluntary work, are/were you mainly in contact with people of your own ethnic origin, mainly with white people or equally with both?</b>							
Own ethnic group	1	0	5	5	7	5	4
Both	10	11	18	3	12	8	10
Mainly white people	16	15	4	2	5	3	8
No voluntary work	73	73	73	90	76	85	78
<i>weighted bases</i>	<i>833</i>	<i>732</i>	<i>688</i>	<i>650</i>	<i>647</i>	<i>723</i>	<i>4273</i>
<i>unweighted bases</i>	<i>807</i>	<i>696</i>	<i>657</i>	<i>611</i>	<i>614</i>	<i>676</i>	<i>4061</i>
<b>Do/did your activities with this organisation bring you mainly into contact with people of your own ethnic origin, mainly with white people or equally with both?</b>							
Own ethnic group	1	1	5	3	7	4	3
Both	12	13	18	5	8	7	11
Mainly white people	24	20	4	1	5	3	10
No membership	62	66	73	91	79	87	76
<i>weighted bases</i>	<i>833</i>	<i>732</i>	<i>688</i>	<i>650</i>	<i>648</i>	<i>722</i>	<i>4273</i>
<i>unweighted bases</i>	<i>835</i>	<i>732</i>	<i>692</i>	<i>650</i>	<i>643</i>	<i>723</i>	<i>4275</i>

respondents from each group said they (also) thought of themselves as being 'British': 87 per cent of white British people, 73 per cent of Irish people, 71 per cent of Black Caribbean people, 70 per cent of Pakistani people, 67 per cent of Bangladeshi people and 65 per cent of Indian people.

Three-fifths of white British and Irish respondents, three-quarters of Black Caribbean respondents and at least four-fifths of Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents agreed that people from ethnic minority groups should 'preserve as much as possible their culture and way of life'. And between a quarter and a third of people from each ethnic group agreed that people from ethnic minority groups should 'adopt more the culture and way of life of 'white' (or English) people'. Over half of Indian and Pakistani people agreed that people from ethnic minority groups are 'seeing their culture and way of life being replaced by the culture of white (or English) people', compared with just over a third of Bangladeshi and white British people, three in ten Black Caribbean people and just under a quarter of Irish people.

Fewer than 10 per cent of people from the white British, Irish and Bangladeshi groups reported having experienced a racially motivated attack in the last year, or having ever being refused a job for reasons of 'race'/ethnicity. Thirteen per cent of Pakistani and Indian people and 15 per cent of Black Caribbean people reported having experienced a racially motivated attack in the last year. When asked about ever having been refused a job for reasons of 'race'/ethnicity, this figure rose to 16 per cent among Pakistani people, 19 per cent among Indian people and 36 per cent among Caribbean people. Bangladeshi respondents were those least likely to believe that half or more of British employers would employ discriminatory recruitment practices. One in nine Bangladeshi people believed this, compared with one in six Irish people, one in five white British, Indian and Pakistani people and two-thirds of Black

Caribbean people. There were low rates of volunteering and working with social clubs or organisations, particularly among the Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian groups.

### Components of Indian 'ethnicity'

The next sections describe the principal components analyses conducted for each ethnic group separately. For each ethnic group, details of the key questions loading onto the components extracted are shown, together with the reliability coefficient (Cronbach's alpha). As the questions included in the analyses for the different ethnic groups were the same, the response options for the various questions have only been shown for the Indian group. The direction of the variable loading (indicating whether the questions were positively or negatively correlated) is indicated in the accompanying tables. Each component of has been given a 'working title' to aid the presentation of results.

Analysis retaining all components with an eigenvalue of 1 or over for the Indian group produced a four component model. Table 5 shows the loadings of the different variables included in the analysis onto the four components, for this group. The working titles given to the four components were: enculturation; community participation; being a member of a racialised group; and cultural assimilation.

The questions loading most highly on component 1 (enculturation) were:

- 'How often do you wear Indian clothes?'  
(Responses: 'Never'; 'At social events'; 'At home'; 'At work, or while shopping'; 'All the time')
- 'Who do you speak to in a language other than English?'  
( 'No-one'; 'Own-age relatives'; 'Younger relatives'; 'Older relatives'; 'Friends outside work'; 'Work friends')
- 'Would you personally mind if a close relative were to marry a white person?'  
( 'I wouldn't mind'; 'I would mind a little'; 'I would very much mind')
- Do you strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree or strongly agree with these statements:
  - 'In many ways I think of myself as being Indian'
  - 'People of Indian origin should try to preserve as much as possible of their culture and way of life'
- Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with this statement:

- ‘People of Indian origin are seeing their way of life and culture being replaced by the culture of white people’

(Cronbach’s alpha = 0.58)

The questions loading heavily onto component 2 (community participation) were:

- ‘Does your voluntary work bring you mainly into contact with people of your ethnic origin, mainly white people or about equally with both?’  
(‘Mainly people from my own ethnic group’; ‘Both’; ‘Mainly white’; ‘Don’t volunteer’)
- ‘Do your activities with this organisation bring you mainly into contact with people of your ethnic origin, mainly white people or about equally with both?’  
(‘Mainly people from my own ethnic group’; ‘Both’; ‘Mainly white’; ‘Am not a member of an organisation’)

(Cronbach’s alpha = 0.64)

The questions loading heavily onto component 3 (member of a racialised group) were:

- ‘Have you ever been a victim of a racially motivated attack (verbal or physical abuse to the person or property)?’
- ‘Have you ever been treated unfairly at work or been refused a job on the basis of race, colour or your religious or cultural background?’
- ‘How many of the employers in Britain do you think would refuse a job to a person because of their race, colour, religion or cultural background?’  
(‘None’; ‘A few’; ‘About half’; ‘Most’)

(Cronbach’s alpha = 0.42)

The questions loading heavily onto component 4 (cultural assimilation) were:

- Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with these statements:
  - ‘In many ways I think of myself as being British’
  - ‘People of Indian origin should adopt more the culture and way of life of white people’

(Cronbach’s alpha = 0.40)

Table 5 also shows that these variables did not load highly onto any of the other components, for this group. Table 6 shows the Pearson product-moment correlation between the different components. This suggested statistically significant, though small, positive correlation between Component 4 (cultural assimilation) and Component 1 (enculturation) and negative correlations

**Table 5: Variable loadings for ‘ethnicity’ components, Indian group only**

	<b>Component 1: Enculturation</b>	<b>Component 2: Community participation</b>	<b>Component 3: Member of a racialised group</b>	<b>Component 4: Cultural assimilation</b>
Wears Indian clothes	<b>0.570</b>	-0.102	-0.279	0.238
Speaks languages other than English	<b>0.603</b>	-0.000	-0.028	0.040
Minds mixed marriages	<b>0.580</b>	0.045	-0.058	0.256
Thinks people should preserve their way of life	<b>0.691</b>	-0.084	0.019	-0.087
Thinks of self as Indian	<b>0.595</b>	0.000	0.020	-0.050
Does not think people are seeing their way of life replaced by those of white people	<b>-0.426</b>	-0.096	-0.225	0.222
Does not hold organisation membership	-0.044	<b>0.857</b>	0.007	0.082
Does not do voluntary work	-0.022	<b>0.839</b>	-0.106	-0.065
Victim of racism	-0.061	-0.115	<b>0.431</b>	-0.075
Discriminated at work	0.014	-0.052	<b>0.795</b>	0.141
British employers are racist	0.026	0.071	<b>0.787</b>	0.098
Does not think of self as British	0.100	0.095	0.151	<b>0.734</b>
Does not think people should adopt more the way of life of white people	-0.071	-0.066	-0.004	<b>0.777</b>

**Table 6: Correlations between ‘ethnicity’ components, Indian group only**

	<b>Enculturation</b>	<b>Community participation</b>	<b>Member of a racialised group</b>	<b>Cultural assimilation</b>
Enculturation	1.00	-	-	-
Community	-0.01	1.00	-	-
Racialisation	0.03	-0.10*	1.00	-
Cultural assimilation	0.11**	-0.01	-0.14**	1.00

\*p < 0.05

\*\*p < 0.001

between Component 3 (being a member of a racialised group) and Components 4 (cultural assimilation) and 2 (community participation).

#### Components of Pakistani 'ethnicity'

Analysis retaining all components with an eigenvalue of 1 or over for the Pakistani group produced a four component model. Table 7 shows the loadings of the different variables included in the analysis onto the four components, for this group. The working titles given to the four components were, again: enculturation; community participation; being a member of a racialised group; and cultural assimilation.

The questions loading most highly on component 1 (enculturation) were:

- 'Who do you speak to in a language other than English?'
- Do you strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree or strongly agree with these statements:
  - 'In many ways I think of myself as being Pakistani'
  - 'People of Pakistani origin should try to preserve as much as possible of their culture and way of life'
- Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with this statement:
  - 'People of Pakistani origin are seeing their way of life and culture being replaced by the culture of white people'

(Cronbach's alpha = 0.32)

The questions loading heavily onto component 2 (community participation) were:

- 'Does your voluntary work bring you mainly into contact with people of your ethnic origin, mainly white people or about equally with both?'
- 'Do your activities with this organisation bring you mainly into contact with people of your ethnic origin, mainly white people or about equally with both?'

(Cronbach's alpha = 0.58)

The questions loading heavily onto component 3 (member of a racialised group) were:

- 'Have you ever been a victim of a racially motivated attack?'
- 'Have you ever been treated unfairly at work or been refused a job on the basis of race, colour or your religious or cultural background?'
- 'How many of the employers in Britain do you think would refuse a job to a person because of their race, colour, religion or cultural background?'
- 'How often do you wear Pakistani clothes?'

(Cronbach's alpha = 0.37)

**Table 7: Variable loadings for ‘ethnicity’ components, Pakistani group only**

	<b>Component 1: Enculturation</b>	<b>Component 2: Community participation</b>	<b>Component 3: Member of a racialised group</b>	<b>Component 4: Cultural assimilation</b>
Speaks languages other than English	<b>0.528</b>	-0.034	0.196	-0.123
Thinks people should preserve their way of life	<b>0.722</b>	-0.071	-0.036	0.126
Thinks of self as Pakistani	<b>0.672</b>	-0.000	-0.290	0.066
Does not think people are seeing their way of life replaced by those of white people	<b>-0.388</b>	-0.099	-0.150	0.062
Does not hold organisation membership	0.114	<b>0.821</b>	-0.068	-0.072
Does not do voluntary work	-0.089	<b>0.831</b>	-0.019	0.070
Victim of racism	0.043	-0.057	<b>0.589</b>	-0.034
Discriminated at work	0.081	0.018	<b>0.757</b>	-0.039
British employers are racist	0.041	-0.046	<b>0.686</b>	0.269
Wears Pakistani clothes	0.223	0.062	<b>-0.390</b>	0.309
Does not think of self as British	0.063	-0.155	-0.035	<b>0.509</b>
Does not think people should adopt more the way of life of white people	-0.205	0.165	0.186	<b>0.828</b>
Minds mixed marriages	0.408	0.074	-0.093	<b>0.468</b>

**Table 8: Correlations between ‘ethnicity’ components, Pakistani group only**

	<b>Enculturation</b>	<b>Community participation</b>	<b>Member of a racialised group</b>	<b>Cultural assimilation</b>
Enculturation	1.00	-	-	-
Community	0.10	1.00	-	-
Racialisation	0.00*	-0.13**	1.00	-
Cultural assimilation	0.15**	0.05	-0.14**	1.00

\*p < 0.05

\*\*p < 0.001

The questions loading heavily onto component 4 (cultural assimilation) were:

- Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with these statements:
  - ‘In many ways I think of myself as being British’
  - ‘People of Pakistani origin should adopt more the culture and way of life of white people’
  - ‘Would you personally mind if a close relative were to marry a white person?’

(Cronbach’s alpha = 0.36)

Table 7 also shows that, on the whole, these variables did not load highly onto any of the other components, for this group, with the exception of the question exploring the wearing of ‘Pakistani clothes’ which also loaded onto Component 4, exploring cultural assimilation. And the question exploring attitudes towards mixed marriage which also loaded onto Component 1 (enculturation). Table 8 shows the Pearson product-moment correlation between the different components. This suggested statistically significant, though small, positive correlation between Component 1 (enculturation) and Components 3 (being a member of a racialised group) and 4 (cultural assimilation) and negative correlations between Component 3 and Components 2 (community participation) and 4.

#### Components of Bangladeshi ‘ethnicity’

Analysis retaining all components with an eigenvalue of 1 or over for the Bangladeshi group produced a four component model. Table 9 shows the loadings of the different variables included in the analysis onto the four components, for this group. The working titles given to the four components were: enculturation; community participation; being a member of a racialised group; and cultural assimilation.

The questions loading most highly on component 1 (enculturation) were:

- ‘How often do you wear Bangladeshi clothes?’
- ‘Would you personally mind if a close relative were to marry a white person?’
- Do you strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree or strongly agree with these statements:
  - ‘In many ways I think of myself as being Bangladeshi’
  - ‘People of Bangladeshi origin should try to preserve as much as possible of their culture and way of life’

(Cronbach’s alpha = 0.50)



The questions loading heavily onto component 2 (community participation) were:

- ‘Does your voluntary work bring you mainly into contact with people of your ethnic origin, mainly white people or about equally with both?’
- ‘Do your activities with this organisation bring you mainly into contact with people of your ethnic origin, mainly white people or about equally with both?’

(Cronbach’s alpha = 0.67)

The questions loading heavily onto component 3 (member of a racialised group) were:

- ‘Have you ever been a victim of a racially motivated attack (verbal or physical abuse to the person or property)?’
- ‘Have you ever been treated unfairly at work or been refused a job on the basis of race, colour or your religious or cultural background?’
- ‘How many of the employers in Britain do you think would refuse a job to a person because of their race, colour, religion or cultural background?’
- ‘Who do you speak to in a language other than English?’

(Cronbach’s alpha = 0.44)

The questions loading heavily onto component 4 (cultural assimilation) were:

- Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with these statements:
  - ‘In many ways I think of myself as being British’
  - ‘People of Bangladeshi origin should adopt more the culture and way of life of white people’
  - ‘People of Bangladeshi origin are seeing their way of life and culture being replaced by the culture of white people’

(Cronbach’s alpha = 0.54)

Table 9 also shows that, on the whole, these variables did not load highly onto any of the other components, for this group. The exception to this was the question exploring the speaking of languages other than English, which loaded highly onto Components 1 (enculturation) and, particularly, Component 2 (community participation). Table 10 shows the Pearson product-moment correlation between the different components. This suggested statistically significant, though small, positive correlation between Component 4 (cultural assimilation) and Component 1 (traditional) and statistically significant negative correlation between Component 3 (being a member of a racialised group) and Component 1 (enculturation).

**Table 9: Variable loadings for ‘ethnicity’ components, Bangladeshi group only**

	<b>Component 1: Enculturation</b>	<b>Component 2: Community participation</b>	<b>Component 3: Member of a racialised group</b>	<b>Component 4: Cultural assimilation</b>
Wears Bangladeshi clothes	<b>0.352</b>	0.238	0.084	0.180
Minds mixed marriages	<b>0.597</b>	0.094	-0.124	0.136
Thinks people should preserve their way of life	<b>0.806</b>	-0.069	0.053	-0.126
Thinks of self as Bangladeshi	<b>0.742</b>	-0.044	-0.004	-0.008
Membership of predominantly ‘white’ organisation	-0.007	<b>0.788</b>	-0.143	-0.047
Does not hold organisation membership	0.107	<b>0.764</b>	-0.074	-0.087
Speaks languages other than English	0.266	<b>-0.398</b>	<b>-0.403</b>	-0.070
Victim of racism	0.158	0.152	<b>0.740</b>	-0.107
Discriminated at work	-0.049	-0.242	<b>0.719</b>	0.012
British employers are racist	-0.060	-0.180	<b>0.697</b>	0.012
Does not think of self as British	0.162	-0.076	-0.133	<b>0.685</b>
Does not think people should adopt more the way of life of white people	0.110	-0.190	0.152	<b>0.739</b>
Does not think people are seeing their way of life replaced by those of white people	-0.197	0.114	-0.073	<b>0.687</b>

**Table 10: Correlations between ‘ethnicity’ components, Bangladeshi group only**

	<b>Enculturation</b>	<b>Community participation</b>	<b>Member of a racialised group</b>	<b>Cultural assimilation</b>
Enculturation	1.00	-	-	-
Community	0.07	1.00	-	-
Racialisation	-0.09*	-0.07	1.00	-
Cultural assimilation	0.12**	0.05	-0.05	1.00

\*p < 0.05

\*\*p < 0.001

### Components of Black Caribbean 'ethnicity'

Analysis retaining all components with an eigenvalue of 1 or over for the Black Caribbean group produced a four component model. Table 11 shows the loadings of the different variables included in the analysis onto the four components, for this group. The working titles given to the four components were: enculturation; community participation; being a member of a racialised group; and cultural assimilation.

The questions loading most highly on component 1 (enculturation) were:

- Do you strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree or strongly agree with these statements:
  - 'In many ways I think of myself as being Caribbean'
  - 'People of Caribbean origin should try to preserve as much as possible of their culture and way of life'
- Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with this statement:
  - 'People of Caribbean origin are seeing their way of life and culture being replaced by the culture of white people'

(Cronbach's alpha = 0.43)

The questions loading heavily onto component 2 (community participation) were:

- 'Does your voluntary work bring you mainly into contact with people of your ethnic origin, mainly white people or about equally with both?'
- 'Do your activities with this organisation bring you mainly into contact with people of your ethnic origin, mainly white people or about equally with both?'

(Cronbach's alpha = 0.46)

The questions loading heavily onto component 3 (member of a racialised group) were:

- 'Have you ever been a victim of a racially motivated attack (verbal or physical abuse to the person or property)?'
- 'Have you ever been treated unfairly at work or been refused a job on the basis of race, colour or your religious or cultural background?'
- 'How many of the employers in Britain do you think would refuse a job to a person because of their race, colour, religion or cultural background?'
- 'Who do you speak to in a language other than English?'
- 'Would you personally mind if a close relative were to marry a white person?'

(Cronbach's alpha = 0.30)

**Table 11: Variable loadings for ‘ethnicity’ components, Black Caribbean group only**

	Component 1: Enculturation	Component 2: Community participation	Component 3: Member of a racialised group	Component 4: Cultural assimilation
Does not think people are seeing their way of life replaced by those of white people	<b>-0.446</b>	0.159	-0.306	0.288
Thinks people should preserve their way of life	<b>0.724</b>	0.087	0.010	0.187
Thinks of self as Caribbean	<b>0.756</b>	-0.037	0.012	-0.030
Does not hold organisation membership	-0.108	<b>0.751</b>	0.059	0.028
Does not do voluntary work	0.081	<b>0.761</b>	-0.057	-0.048
Speaks languages other than English	0.257	-0.234	<b>-0.380</b>	0.247
Minds mixed marriages	0.093	-0.041	<b>0.514</b>	-0.012
Victim of racism	-0.222	-0.331	<b>0.485</b>	0.062
Discriminated at work	0.009	0.006	<b>0.672</b>	0.129
British employers are racist	0.230	0.129	<b>0.537</b>	0.232
Does not think of self as British	-0.234	-0.102	0.090	<b>0.729</b>
Wears Caribbean clothes	0.215	-0.086	-0.039	<b>0.647</b>
Does not think people should adopt more the way of life of white people	0.056	0.078	0.127	<b>0.528</b>

**Table 12: Correlations between ‘ethnicity’ components, Black Caribbean group only**

	Enculturation	Community participation	Member of a racialised group	Cultural assimilation
Enculturation	1.00	-	-	-
Community	-0.10*	1.00	-	-
Racialisation	0.12**	-0.11**	1.00	-
Cultural assimilation	0.16**	-0.09*	0.10**	1.00

\*p < 0.05

\*\*p < 0.001

The questions loading heavily onto component 4 (cultural assimilation) were:

- Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with these statements:
  - 'In many ways I think of myself as being British'
  - 'People of Caribbean origin should adopt more the culture and way of life of white people'
- 'How often do you wear something that is meant to show a connection with the Caribbean or Africa?'

(Responses: 'Never'; 'At social events'; 'At home'; 'At work, or while shopping'; 'All the time')

(Cronbach's alpha = 0.44)

Table 11 shows that some of the variables included also loaded highly onto the other components determined by the analysis for this group. The question exploring the sense that Caribbean people are seeing their way of life replaced by that of white people loaded onto Components 3 (member of a racialised group) and 4 (cultural assimilation), as well as onto Component 1 (enculturation). And the question exploring the speaking of languages other than English loaded onto all four of the components found. The question exploring being a victim of a racist verbal or physical attack loaded onto Component 2 (community participation) as well as Component 3 (member of a racialised group). Table 12 shows the Pearson product-moment correlation between the different components. This suggested statistically significant, though small, positive correlation between Component 4 (cultural assimilation) and Components 1 (enculturation) and 3 (being a member of a racialised group) and also between Component 3 and Component 1. There was statistically significant negative correlation between Component 2 (community participation) and Components 1, 3 and 4.

#### Components of Irish 'ethnicity'

Analysis retaining all components with an eigenvalue of 1 or over for the Irish group produced a four component model. Table 13 shows the loadings of the different variables included in the analysis onto the four components, for this group. The working titles given to the four components were: enculturation; community participation; being a member of a racialised group; and cultural assimilation.

The questions loading most highly on component 1 (enculturation) were:

- 'Who do you speak to in a language other than English?'
- Do you strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree or strongly agree with these statements:
  - 'In many ways I think of myself as being Irish'

- 'People of Irish origin should try to preserve as much as possible of their culture and way of life'
  - Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with these statements:
    - 'In many ways I think of myself as being British'
- (Cronbach's alpha = 0.50)

The questions loading heavily onto component 2 (community participation) were:

- 'Does your voluntary work bring you mainly into contact with people of your ethnic origin, mainly white people or about equally with both?'
- 'Do your activities with this organisation bring you mainly into contact with people of your ethnic origin, mainly white people or about equally with both?'

(Cronbach's alpha = 0.47)

The questions loading heavily onto component 3 (member of a racialised group) were:

- 'Have you ever been a victim of a racially motivated attack (verbal or physical abuse to the person or property)?'
- 'Have you ever been treated unfairly at work or been refused a job on the basis of race, colour or your religious or cultural background?'
- 'How many of the employers in Britain do you think would refuse a job to a person because of their race, colour, religion or cultural background?'

(Cronbach's alpha = 0.24)

The questions loading heavily onto component 4 (cultural assimilation) were:

- Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with these statements:
  - 'People of Irish origin should adopt more the culture and way of life of English people'
- Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with this statement:
  - 'People of Irish origin are seeing their way of life and culture being replaced by the culture of English people'
- 'Would you personally mind if a close relative were to marry an English person?'

(Cronbach's alpha = 0.07)

Table 13 also shows that the question exploring the speaking of languages other than English was the only one which loaded highly onto any of the other components. This question loaded highly onto both Components 1 (enculturation) and 3 (being a member of a racialised group). Table 14 shows the Pearson product-moment correlation between the different components.

**Table 13: Variable loadings for ‘ethnicity’ components, Irish group only**

	Component 1: Enculturation	Component 2: Community participation	Component 3: Member of a racialised group	Component 4: Cultural assimilation
Speaks languages other than English	<b>0.298</b>	-0.198	0.271	-0.111
Thinks people should preserve their way of life	<b>0.547</b>	0.083	0.065	-0.256
Thinks of self as Irish	<b>0.817</b>	0.026	-0.096	-0.051
Does not think of self as British	<b>0.691</b>	-0.030	0.026	0.364
Does not hold organisation membership	0.023	<b>0.784</b>	-0.043	-0.010
Does not do voluntary work	0.013	<b>0.800</b>	0.097	-0.037
Victim of racism	-0.011	0.085	<b>0.602</b>	0.113
Discriminated at work	0.237	0.004	<b>0.467</b>	0.135
British employers are racist	-0.123	-0.060	<b>0.716</b>	-0.168
Does not think people should adopt more the way of life of English people	-0.063	0.132	0.250	<b>0.518</b>
Does not think people are seeing their way of life replaced by those of English people	0.169	-0.001	-0.255	<b>0.687</b>
Minds mixed marriages	0.124	0.106	-0.067	<b>-0.351</b>

**Table 14: Correlations between ‘ethnicity’ components, Irish group only**

	Enculturation	Community participation	Member of a racialised group	Cultural assimilation
Enculturation	1.00	-	-	-
Community	-0.02	1.00	-	-
Racialisation	0.11**	-0.11**	1.00	-
Cultural assimilation	-0.04	-0.04	0.10*	1.00

\*p < 0.05

\*\*p < 0.001

This suggested statistically significant, though small, positive correlation between Component 3 and Components 1 and 4 (cultural assimilation). And statistically significant negative correlation between Component 3 and Component 2 (community participation).

#### Components of white British 'ethnicity'

Because the questions exploring speaking languages other than English, wearing Asian or Caribbean clothes and thinking of yourself as being a member of an ethnic group other than 'British' were not asked of white British respondents, it was not possible to include the same variables in the analysis for the white British group as were included in the 'ethnic minority' analyses. Including all the components with an eigenvalue of 1 or over produced a three component model (table 15). The working titles given to these three components were: ethnic integration; community participation; and being a member of a racialised group.

The questions loading most heavily onto component 1 (ethnic integration) were:

- Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with these statements:
  - 'Ethnic minority people should try to preserve as much as possible of their culture and way of life'<sup>9</sup>
  - 'Ethnic minority people should adopt more the culture and way of life of white people'
  - 'Ethnic minority people are not seeing their way of life and culture being replaced by the culture of white people'
- 'Would you personally mind if a close relative were to marry someone from an ethnic minority group?'

('I would very much mind'; 'I would mind a little'; 'I wouldn't mind')

(Cronbach's alpha = 0.65)

The questions loading most heavily onto component 2 (community participation) were:

- 'Does your voluntary work bring you mainly into contact with people from ethnic minority groups, mainly white people or about equally with both?'

('Don't volunteer'; 'Mainly white'; 'Both'; 'Mainly people from ethnic minority groups')

- 'Do your activities with this organisation bring you mainly into contact with people from ethnic minority groups, mainly white people or about equally with both?'

('Am not a member of an organisation'; 'Mainly white'; 'Both'; 'Mainly people from ethnic minority groups')

(Cronbach's alpha = 0.45)



The questions loading most heavily onto component 3 (member of a racialised group) were:

- ‘Have you ever been a victim of a racially motivated attack (verbal or physical abuse to the person or property)?’
- ‘Have you ever been treated unfairly at work or been refused a job on the basis of race, colour or your religious or cultural background?’
- ‘How many of the employers in Britain do you think would refuse a job to a person because of their race, colour, religion or cultural background?’
- Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with this statement:
  - ‘In many ways I think of myself as being British’

(Cronbach’s alpha = 0.19)

Table 15 also shows that, on the whole, these variables did not load highly onto any of the other components, for this group. The exceptions to this were the question exploring thinking of yourself as being ‘British’, which loaded onto Component 1 (ethnic integration) as well as Component 3, and the question exploring discrimination at work, which also loaded fairly highly onto Component 2, exploring community participation. Table 16 shows the Pearson product-moment correlation between the different components. This would suggest statistically significant, though small, inverse correlation between Component 1, exploring issues of cultural integration, and Component 2, community participation. There was no statistically significant correlation (at the  $p < 0.05$  level) between components 1 and 3 and 2 and 3.

#### Components of ‘ethnicity’: results from the all-ethnic-minority-group model

Due to the consistency found in the results of the principal component analyses conducted on each ethnic group separately and in order to further explore ethnic differences in scores on the different components of ethnicity found, the analysis was repeated combining the different ethnic minority groups. As not all of the questions were asked of the white British group, only people assessed as being from ethnic minority groups, using the quantitative HSE measures, were included in this stage of the analysis. Analysis retaining all components with an eigenvalue of 1 or over produced a four component model (Tables 17 and 18). Again, details of the key questions loading onto these four components, together with the reliability coefficient (Cronbach’s alpha) for them are shown next. Each dimension has been given a ‘working title’ to aid the presentation of results. The key questions loading on these four components were very similar to those loading on the separate models conducted for each ethnic minority group separately. As such, the working titles given to the four components were the same as those for the separate ‘ethnic minority’ group models: enculturation; community participation; being a member of a racialised group; and cultural assimilation.

**Table 15: Variable loadings for ‘ethnicity’ components for the white British group**

	<b>Component 1: Ethnic integration</b>	<b>Component 2: Community participation</b>	<b>Component 3: Member of a racialised group</b>
Does not think people should adopt more the way of life of white people	<b>0.775</b>	0.009	0.010
Does not think people are seeing their way of life replaced by those of white people	<b>0.716</b>	-0.003	-0.076
Does not mind mixed marriages	<b>0.520</b>	-0.136	-0.153
Does not think people should preserve their way of life	<b>0.713</b>	0.025	0.091
Does not hold organisation membership	0.002	<b>0.755</b>	0.091
Does not do voluntary work	-0.095	<b>0.750</b>	-0.116
Victim of racism	-0.042	-0.128	<b>0.481</b>
Discriminated at work	-0.052	-0.371	<b>0.514</b>
British employers are racist	-0.057	0.200	<b>0.635</b>
Does not think of self as British	0.453	0.123	<b>0.484</b>

**Table 16: Correlations between ‘ethnicity’ components for the white British group**

	<b>Ethnic integration</b>	<b>Community participation</b>	<b>Member of a racialised group</b>
Ethnic integration	1.00	-	-
Community participation	-0.07*	1.00	-
Member of a racialised group	0.03	-0.06	1.00

\*p < 0.05

The questions loading heavily onto component 1 (enculturation) were:

- How often do you wear Asian clothes/something that is meant to show a connection with the Caribbean or Africa<sup>10</sup>?  
(Responses: 'Never'; 'At social events'; 'At home'; 'At work, or while shopping'; 'All the time')
  - 'Who do you speak to in a language other than English?'  
( 'No-one'; 'Own-age relatives'; 'Younger relatives'; 'Older relatives'; 'Friends outside work'; 'Work friends')
  - 'Would you personally mind if a close relative were to marry a white/English<sup>11</sup> person?'  
( 'I wouldn't mind'; 'I would mind a little'; 'I would very much mind')
  - Do you strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree or strongly agree with this statement:
    - 'In many ways I think of myself as being Bangladeshi/Caribbean/Indian/Irish/Pakistani'<sup>12</sup>
    - 'People of Bangladeshi/Caribbean/Indian/Irish/Pakistani' origin should try to preserve as much as possible of their culture and way of life'
- (Cronbach's alpha = 0.71)

The questions loading heavily onto component 2 (community participation) were:

- 'Does your voluntary work bring you mainly into contact with people of your ethnic origin, mainly white/English people or about equally with both?'  
( 'Mainly people from my own ethnic group'; 'Both'; 'Mainly white/English'; 'Don't volunteer')
  - 'Do your activities with this organisation bring you mainly into contact with people of your ethnic origin, mainly white/English people or about equally with both?'  
( 'Mainly people from my own ethnic group'; 'Both'; 'Mainly white/English'; 'Am not a member of an organisation')
- (Cronbach's alpha = 0.57)

The questions loading heavily onto component 3 (member of a racialised group) were:

- 'Have you ever been a victim of a racially motivated attack (verbal or physical abuse to the person or property)?'

- 'Have you ever been treated unfairly at work or been refused a job on the basis of race, colour or your religious or cultural background?'
  - 'How many of the employers in Britain do you think would refuse a job to a person because of their race, colour, religion or cultural background?'  
( 'None'; 'A few'; 'About half'; 'Most' )
- (Cronbach's alpha = 0.42)

The questions loading heavily onto component 4 (cultural assimilation) were:

- Do you strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree or strongly disagree with these statements:
    - 'In many ways I think of myself as being British'
    - 'People of Asian/Caribbean/Irish origin should adopt more the culture and way of life of white/English people'
    - 'People of Asian/Caribbean/Irish origin are seeing their way of life and culture being replaced by the culture of white/English people'
- (Cronbach's alpha = 0.27)

Table 17 shows that some of the variables loaded quite heavily on to more than one component. The variables 'Thinks of self as British' and 'Thinks people [from ethnic minority groups in Britain] are seeing their way of life replaced by that of white people', two of the variables loading most heavily onto component 4 (cultural assimilation), also loaded onto component 1 (enculturation). And the variable exploring concerns about 'people from ethnic minority groups in Britain seeing their way of life replaced' also loaded onto component 3 (member of a racialised group). In general, however, in the all-ethnic-minority-group model, the components seem relatively distinct from each other in terms of the loading of variables upon them. Table 18 shows the Pearson product-moment correlation between the different components. This suggested statistically significant, though small, correlation between Component 4, cultural assimilation and Component 1, enculturation. And an inverse correlation between Component 4 and Component 2, participating in the ethnically-specific community. There was no statistically significant correlation (at the  $p < 0.05$  level) between components 1 and 2, 1 and 3, 2 and 3, and 3 and 4.

**Table 17: Variable loadings for ‘ethnicity’ components, all ethnic minority groups combined**

	Component 1: Enculturation	Component 2: Community participation	Component 3: Member of a racialised group	Component 4: Cultural assimilation
Wears Asian/Caribbean clothes	<b>0.760</b>	0.015	-0.171	-0.027
Speaks languages other than English	<b>0.753</b>	-0.024	0.153	-0.130
Minds mixed marriages	<b>0.701</b>	0.064	-0.143	0.038
Thinks people should preserve their way of life	<b>0.530</b>	0.004	0.187	0.105
Thinks of self as Asian/Caribbean/Irish	<b>0.636</b>	0.013	0.119	0.112
Does not hold organisation membership	0.051	<b>0.832</b>	0.012	-0.026
Does not do voluntary work	-0.018	<b>0.842</b>	0.010	0.008
Victim of racism	0.036	-0.019	<b>0.569</b>	-0.103
Discriminated at work	-0.002	-0.012	<b>0.752</b>	0.030
British employers are racist	-0.187	-0.002	<b>0.713</b>	0.100
Does not think of self as British	0.295	-0.050	0.033	<b>0.631</b>
Does not think people should adopt more the way of life of white people	0.032	-0.000	0.083	<b>0.735</b>
Does not think people are seeing their way of life replaced by those of white people	-0.331	0.030	-0.246	<b>0.504</b>

**Table 18: Correlations between ‘ethnicity’ components, all ethnic minority groups combined**

	Enculturation	Community participation	Member of a racialised group	Cultural assimilation
Enculturation	1.00	-	-	-
Community	0.06*	1.00	-	-
Racialisation	0.02	-0.16**	1.00	-
Cultural assimilation	0.03	-0.01	0.01	1.00

\*p < 0.05

\*\*p < 0.001

### **Ethnic variations in the variables loading on particular components**

The similarity of the findings across the different ethnic minority groups would suggest that these components of 'ethnicity' are relatively consistent. However, there would also appear to be some differences in the conceptualisation of these components across the different ethnic groups explored. Figures 1 to 4 show how the outcome of the principal component analysis varied across the different ethnic groups included, in terms of how the loading of questionnaire items on particular components varied in the all-ethnic-minority-group model, compared with the model produced when the analysis was conducted for each ethnic group separately. Only variables with a fairly large loading on the particular component (greater than or equal to  $\pm 0.2$ ) for two or more ethnic groups are included in the figures. Those variables which loaded most highly on the all ethnic minority group model, termed here the 'principal' variables (described earlier), are not described further here, unless there is discrepancy in the findings for the separate ethnic group models.

Figure 1 shows that for Indian, Pakistani and Black Caribbean respondents, answers to the statement about whether people from ethnic minority groups are seeing their way of life and culture being replaced by the 'majority' culture in Britain loaded negatively onto Component 1, with variables suggesting the importance of the presentation of a more 'traditional' 'ethnic character' for ethnic identification. Attitudes towards the adoption of 'ethnic majority' lifestyles loaded onto this component, for Pakistani and Black Caribbean people. Not thinking of yourself as 'British' also loaded onto this component, for the Black Caribbean and particularly the Irish group. There was also some discrepancy in the strength of the loading of the 'principal' variables on component 1 in the separate ethnic groups models. Concerns about ethnically mixed marriages loaded less strongly onto this component for the Black Caribbean and Irish groups, shown by their absence from the figure for this variable. Wearing clothes to present 'a connection to the Caribbean' also loaded less strongly onto this component, for Black Caribbean people.

Figure 2 shows the loading of the different variables on Component 2, exploring participating in the 'ethnic minority' community, by ethnic group. The only variable which loaded onto this component in the separate ethnic group models was speaking a language other than English which was negatively associated with community participation for Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean people. Figure 3 shows ethnic differences in the loading of the different variables on Component 3, exploring experiences or perceptions that could suggest the racialisation of your ethnicity. Not having a sense that people from ethnic minority groups were seeing their way of life replaced by that of an ethnic majority was associated with this component for the Indian, Black Caribbean and Irish groups. There was also an association between this component and attitudes towards the adoption of 'ethnic majority' lifestyles,

among Pakistani and Irish people. There was a discrepancy in the loading of the variable exploring the speaking of languages other than English between the ethnic groups: with the speaking of non-English languages loading with a sense of racialisation for the Irish group, but against a sense of racialisation for Bangladeshi and Black Caribbean people. Wearing clothes meant to show a connection with Asia loaded negatively on this component for Pakistani and Indian groups.

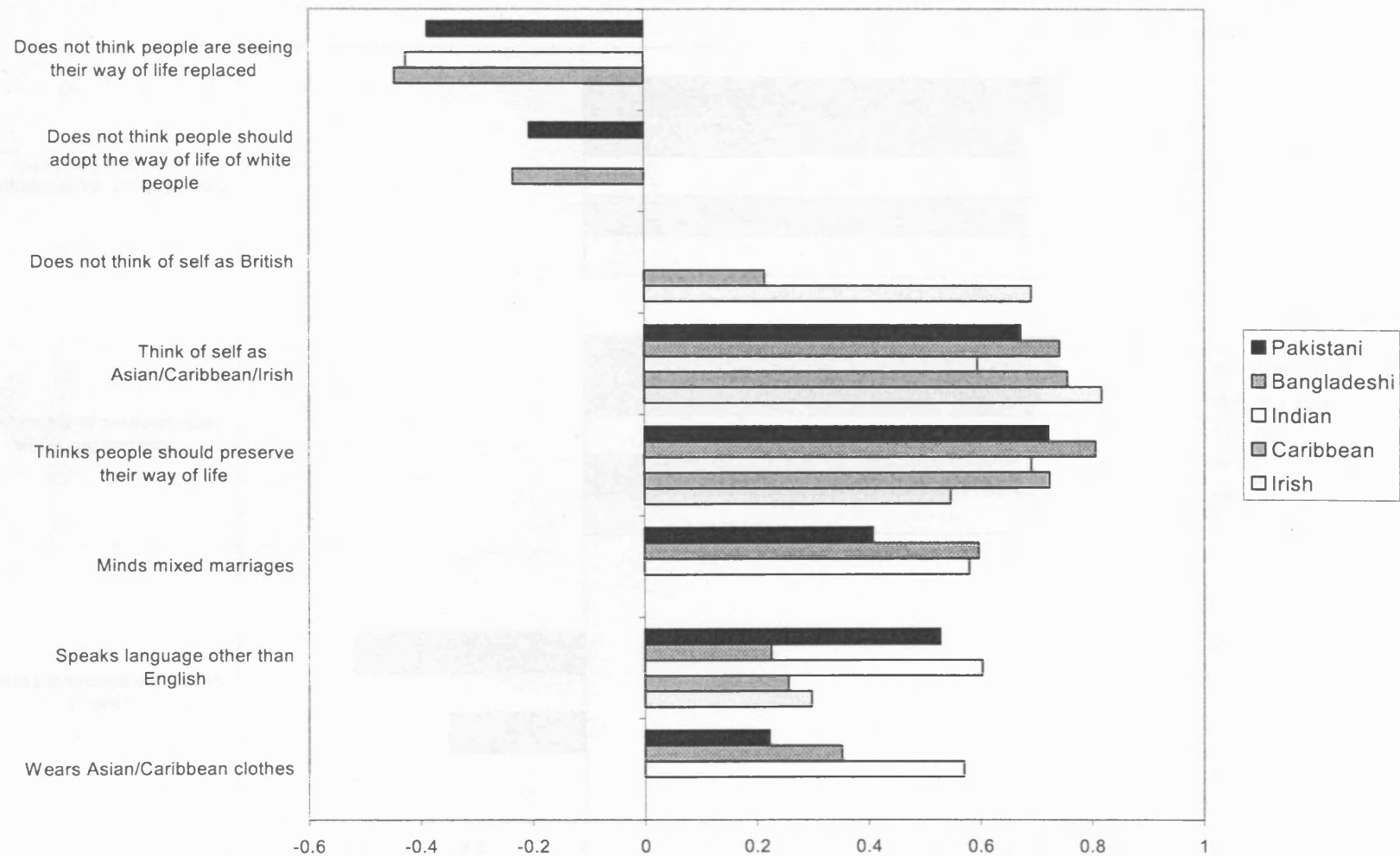
As with Component 1, there was some discrepancy in the loading of the ‘principal’ variables for Component 4, exploring the importance of attitudes towards cultural assimilation for ethnic identification (Figure 4). Not having a sense that people are seeing their way of life replaced by that of the ethnic majority in Britain loaded most highly onto this component for the Irish and Bangladeshi groups, with a lower loading for Black Caribbean and Indian people. Feeling British employers to be racist loaded highly onto this component for the Pakistani and Black Caribbean groups. Concerns about ethnically-mixed marriages loaded positively with this component for Pakistani and Indian groups, but negatively for Irish people. Wearing clothes meant to show a connection with Asia or the Caribbean also loaded positively onto this component, for the Pakistani, Indian and Black Caribbean groups. Although they also suggest some similarities across the different ethnic groups and some differences within them; these findings could suggest that in terms of the aspects found here, there are variations in the meaning of the different aspects of ‘ethnicity’ to people from different ethnic groups.

### **Ethnic variations in scores on particular components**

To further explore the ethnic variations in the findings from the principal component analysis, figures 5 to 8 show how the distribution of scores on particular components varied across ethnic groups, once the analysis had been conducted for all of the ethnic minority groups combined (so the content of each component was the same for each ethnic group). These figures present the extent to which members of particular ethnic groups could be considered to actively engage with particular ‘ethnic’ components – whether they were more likely to behave in ‘enculturative’ ways, for example, or more likely to recognise the racialised nature of their ‘ethnic’ identification. This is not to suggest that these components of ‘ethnicity’ are not as important for the process of ethnic identification and affiliation for this groups, simply that there may be variation in the way that particular individuals relate to this appreciation of their ethnicity (perhaps seeing themselves as more or less ‘traditional’, for example). For these figures the individual scores have been rounded and moving averages have been used to ‘smooth’ the appearance of the distributions.

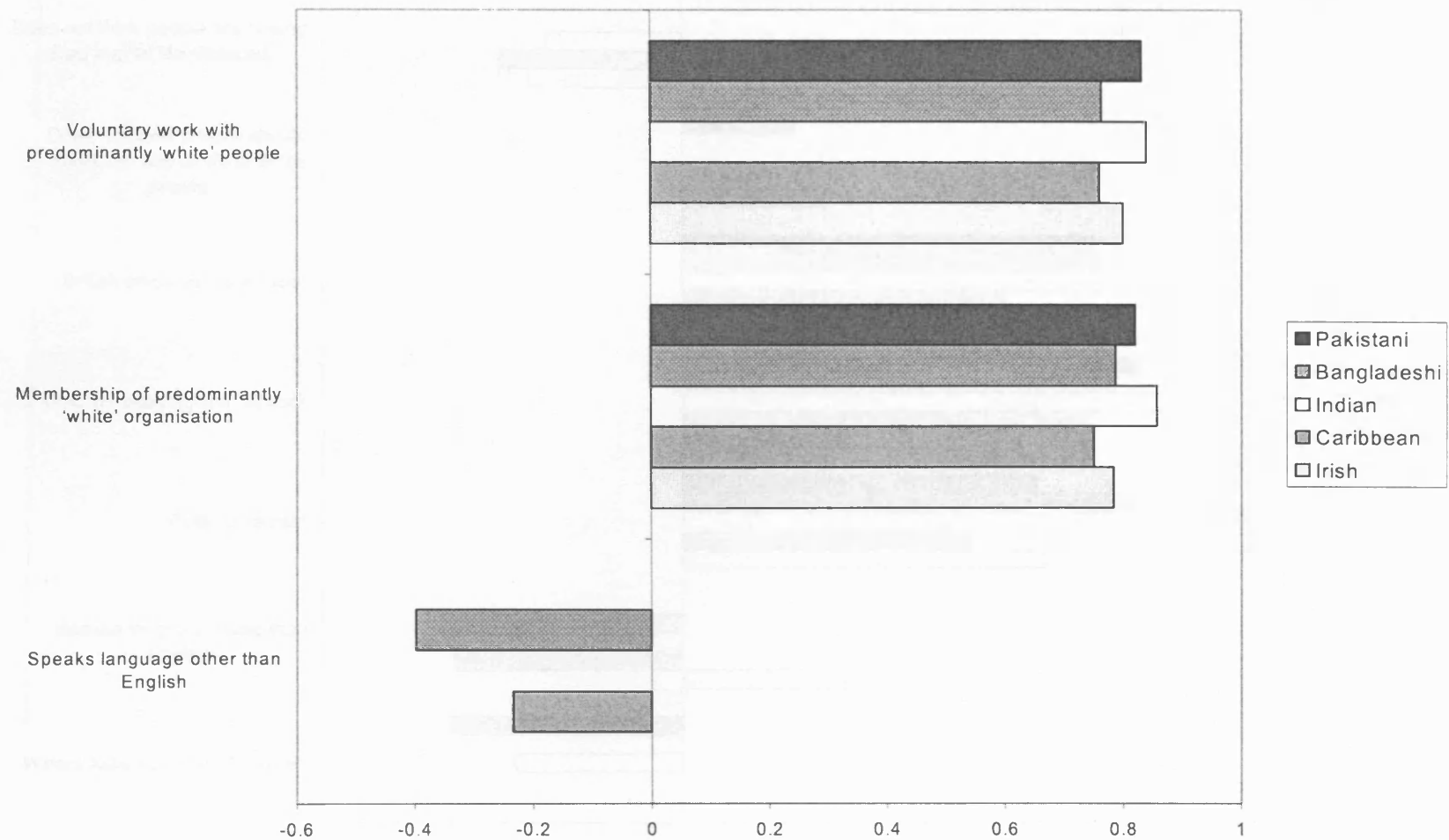
Figure 5 shows the distribution of scores for the ‘enculturation’ component. The distribution of scores for each ethnic group are wide (with fewer than eight per cent of respondents having

**Figure 1: Variable loadings for 'Enculturation'**

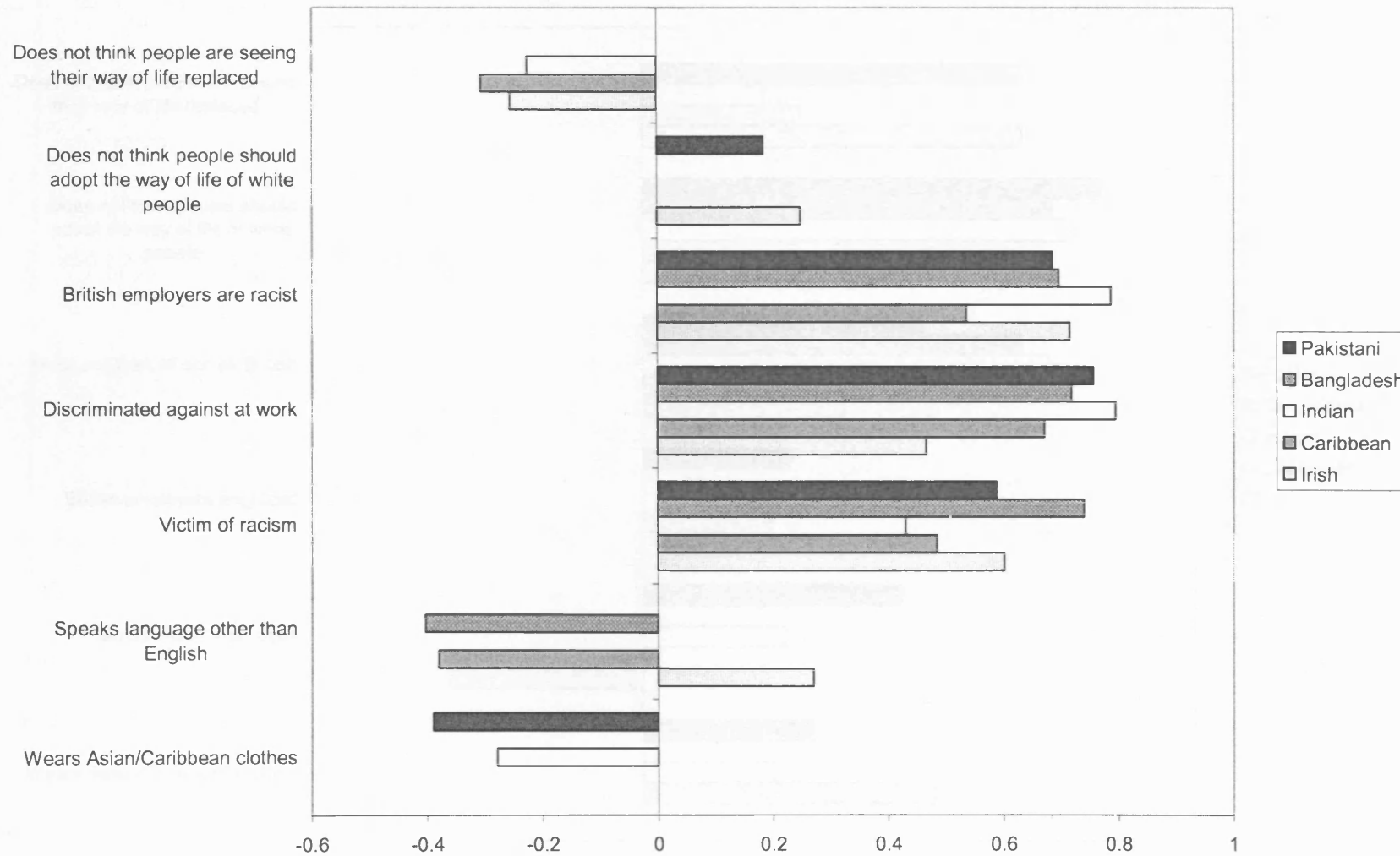




**Figure 2: Variable loadings for 'Community participation'**



**Figure 3: Variable loadings for 'Member of a racialised group'**



**Figure 4: Variable loadings for 'Cultural assimilation'**

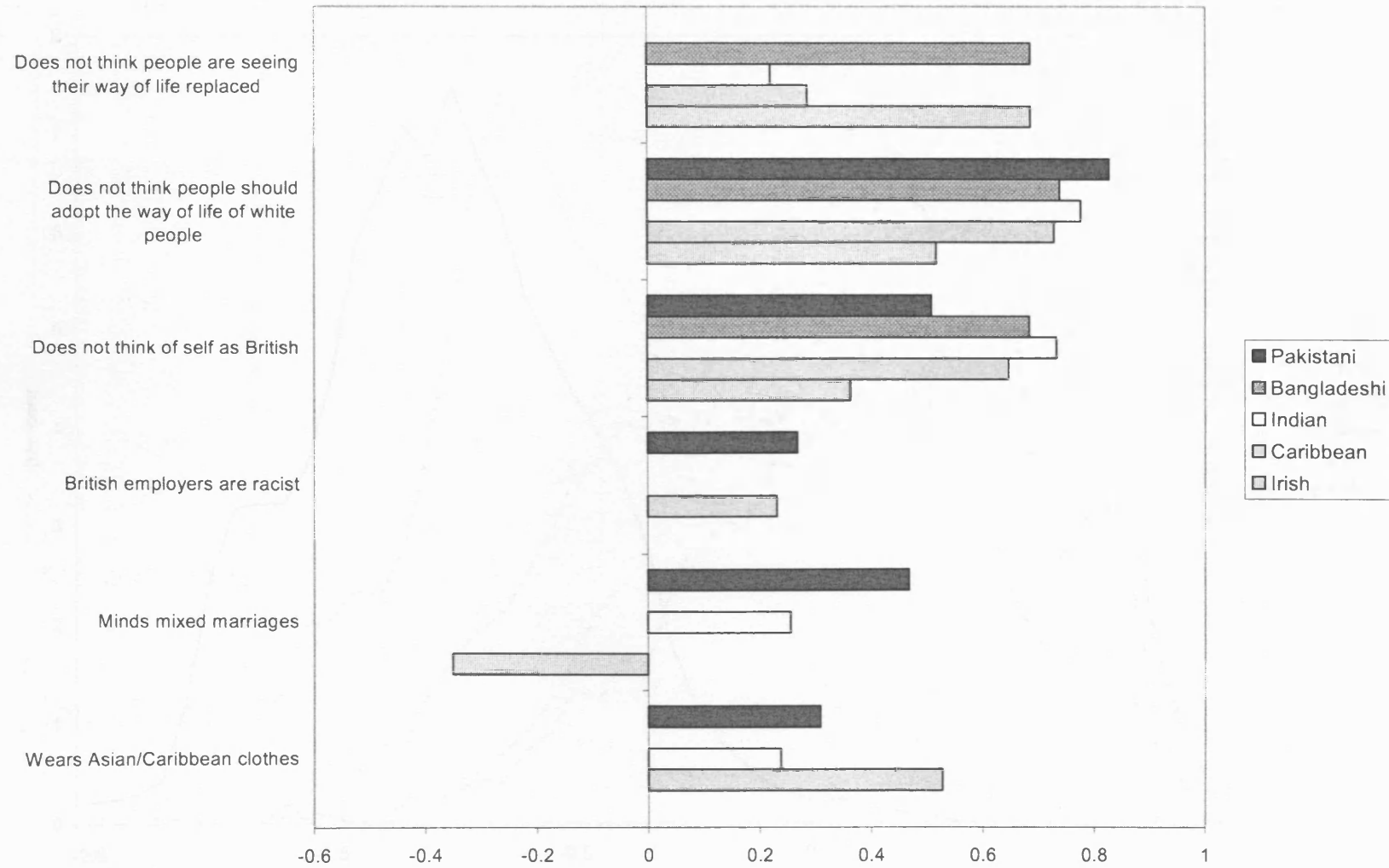


Figure 5: Component scores for 'Enculturation'

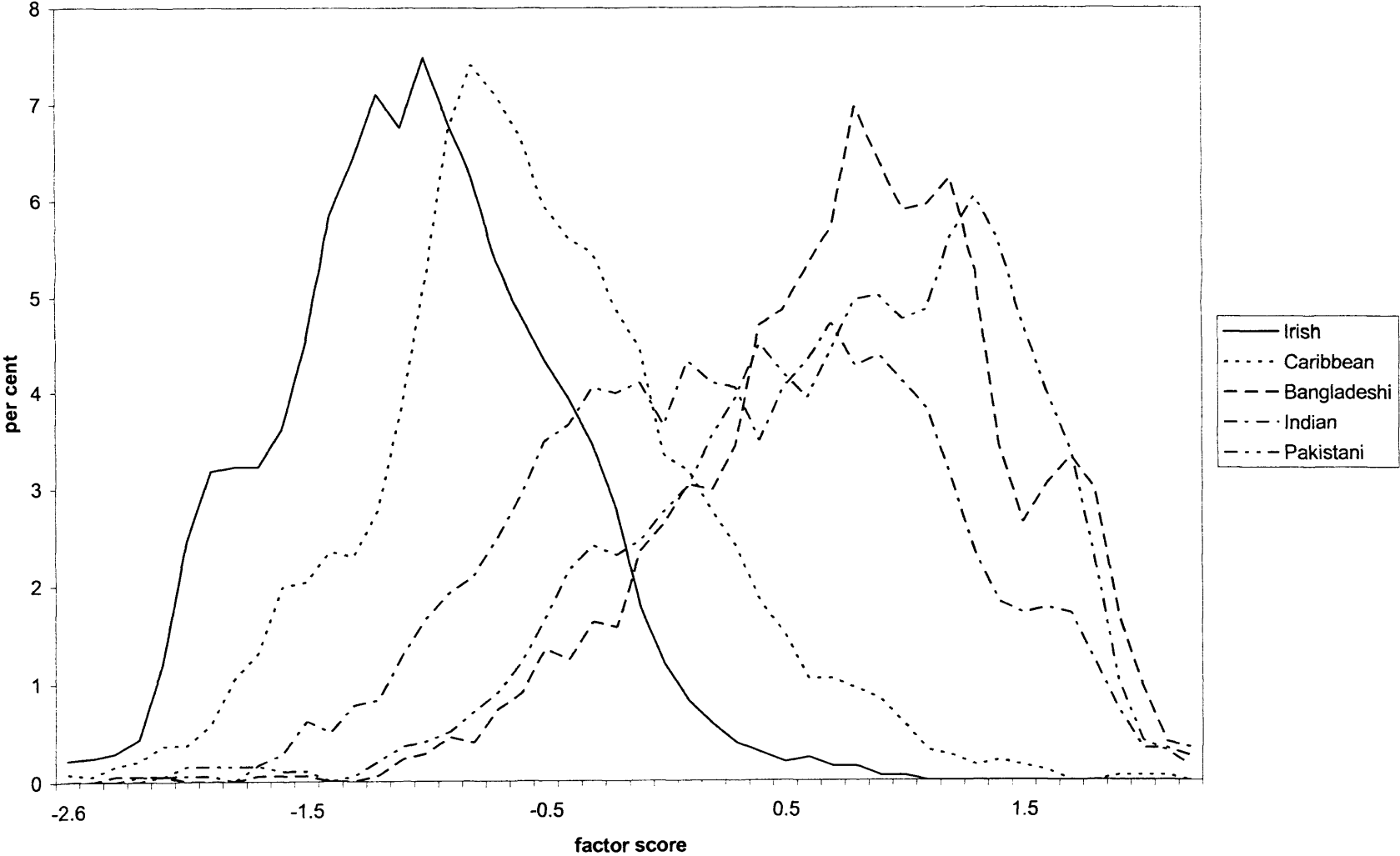


Figure 6: Component scores for ‘Community participation’

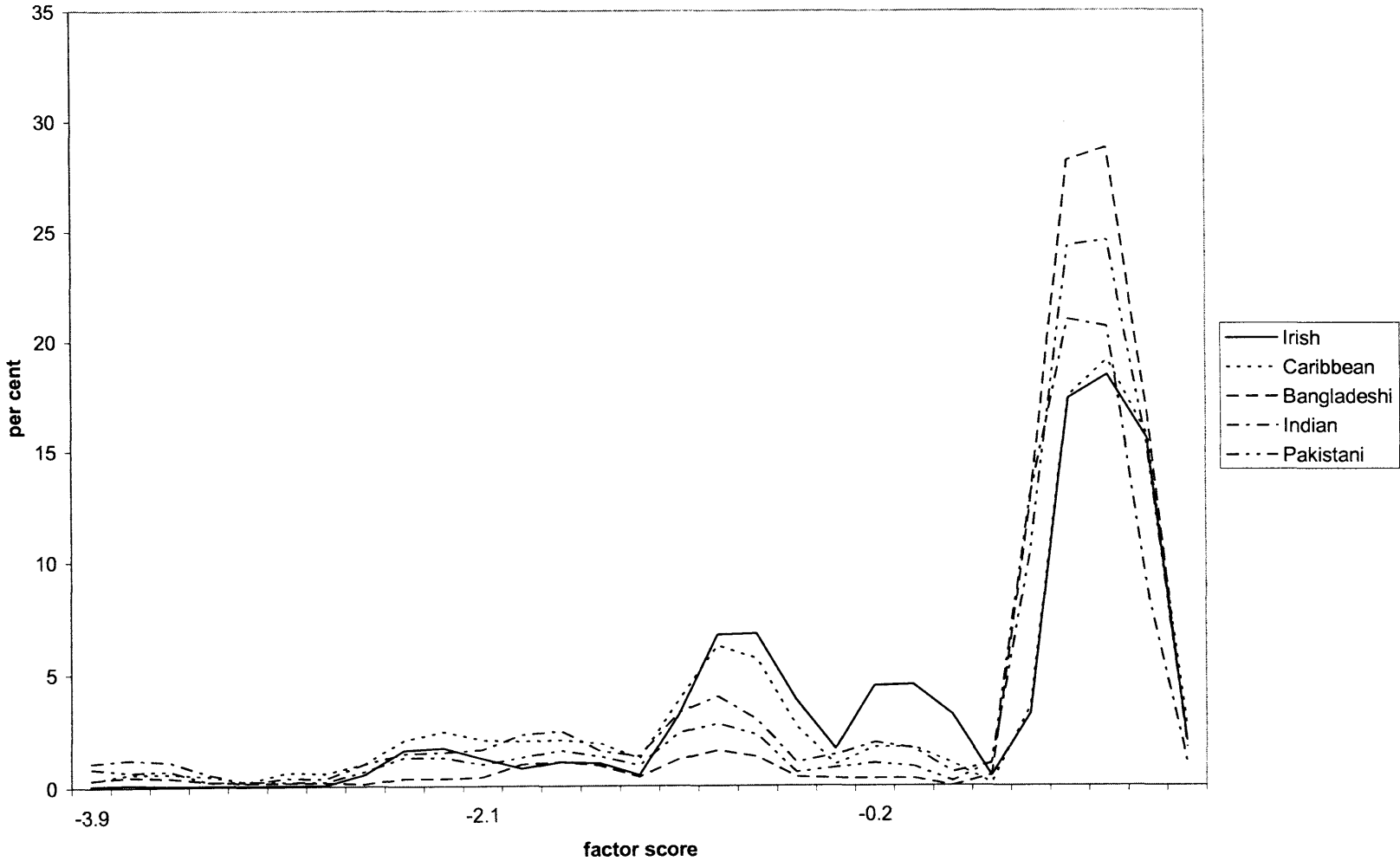


Figure 7: Component scores for ‘Member of a racialised group’

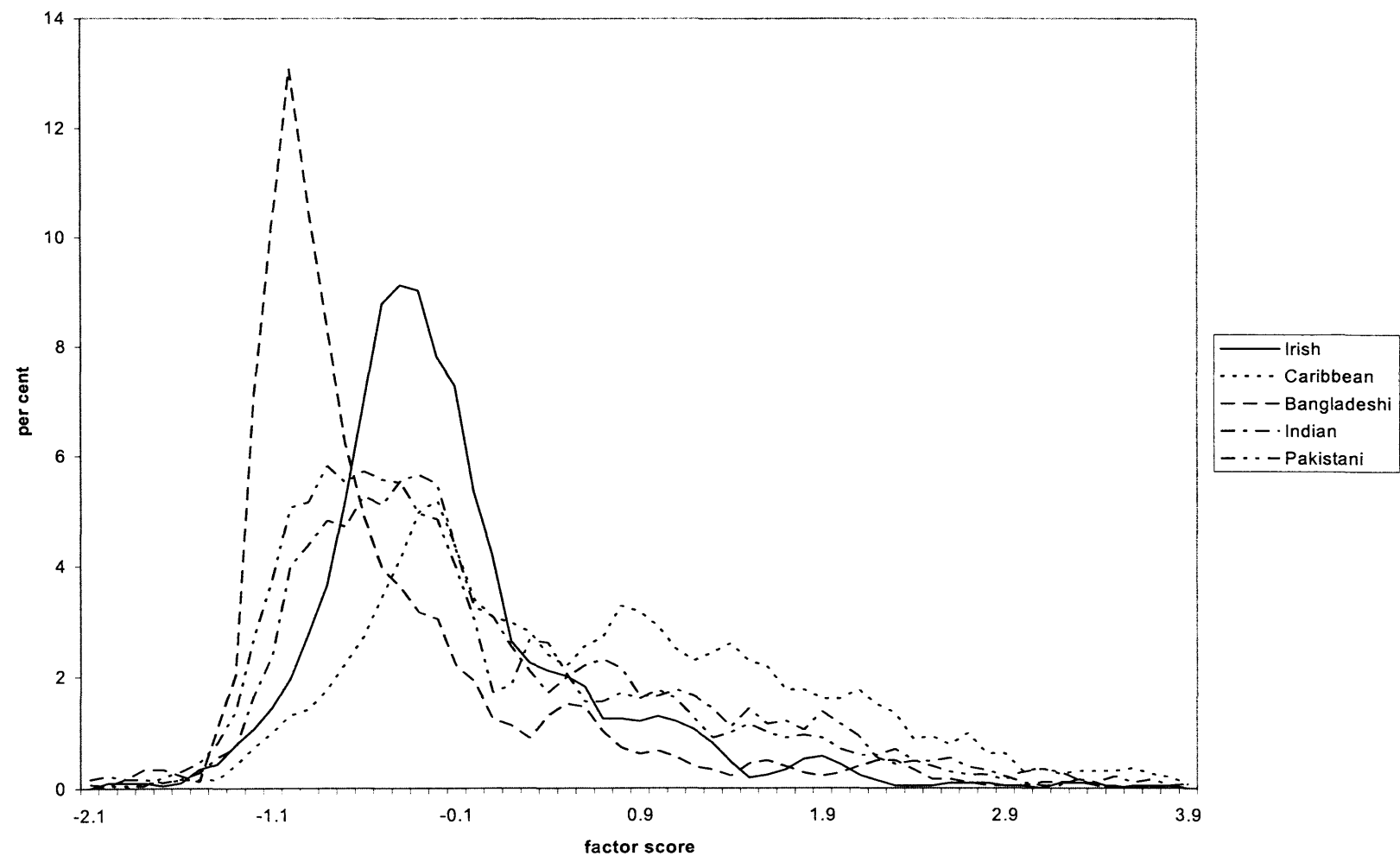
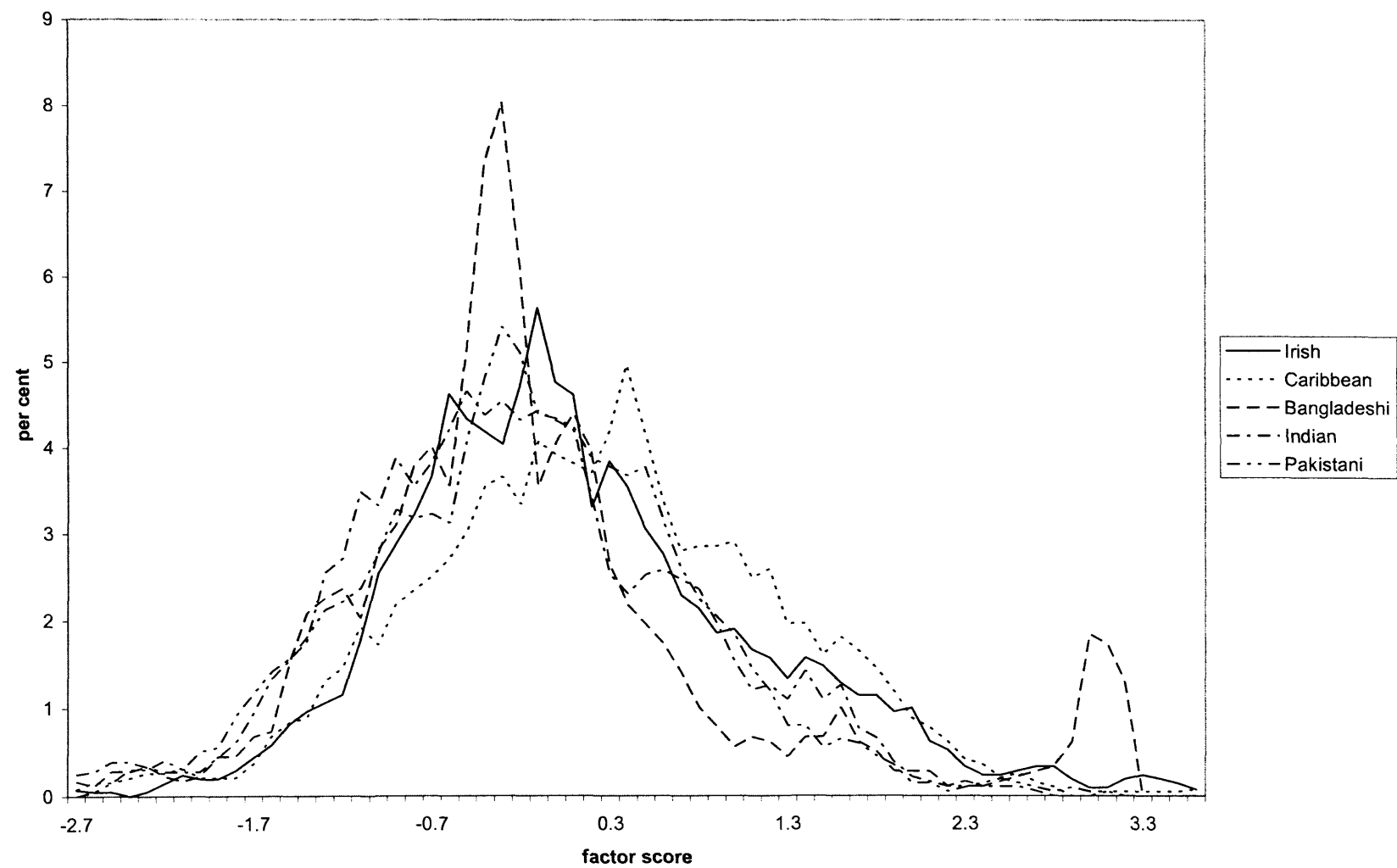


Figure 8: Component scores for ‘Cultural assimilation’



any one score), suggesting great diversity in scores *within* ethnic groups. There also appears to be some broader variation between the different ethnic groups explored: with great similarity in the scores for the different South Asian groups on the one hand, and Irish and Caribbean groups on the other. The scores for the South Asian groups are higher on average than those for the Irish and Black Caribbean groups. Figure 6 shows the distribution of scores on Component 2, exploring participating in the ‘ethnic minority’ community by ethnic group. All the ethnic groups included show very similar patterns suggesting some inter-group similarity. This component shows the most narrow distribution of scores of those identified, with over fifteen per cent of respondents from each ethnic group having the most popular scores. Despite this, the wide distribution of scores could still suggest some intra-group diversity in organisational participation. Figure 7, showing the ethnic differences in the distribution of scores on Component 3, suggesting the racialisation of your ethnicity, shows high peaks and therefore a concentration of scores on for the Bangladeshi and Irish groups, with a flatter distribution of scores for the Pakistani, Indian and Black Caribbean groups. Again, there is a wide distribution of scores. With the exception of the second peak for the Bangladeshi group, scores for Component 4, exploring attitudes towards cultural assimilation showed the greatest similarity across the different ethnic groups, of the components found (Figure 8). Again, there was a wide distributions of scores.

The ethnic variation in scores on particular components is also supported by analyses of variance in the mean scores for each ethnic group which showed statistically significant variation between the ethnic group means from the all-ethnic-minority-group model, for each of the components (Table 19). These variations therefore support the suggestion that while there may be some similarity in the dimensions of ethnicity recognised by people from different ethnic minority groups, there may be variations in the way in which these particular dimensions conform to the lived experience of ethnicity of members of different ethnic groups. While people may ‘judge’ the nature of their ethnicity according to these standards, the conclusions drawn as to the ‘nature’ of their own ethnicity are likely to vary.

**Table 19: Mean scores by ethnic minority group from analyses of variance**

<b>Ethnic group</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Enculturation</b>	<b>Community participation</b>	<b>Member of a racialised group</b>	<b>Cultural assimilation</b>
Irish	694	-1.06	-0.05	-0.15	0.13
Caribbean	627	-0.54	-0.20	0.61	0.22
Bangladeshi	586	0.71	0.26	-0.45	-0.07
Indian	598	0.34	-0.12	0.02	-0.16
Pakistani	650	0.69	0.11	-0.04	-0.14
<b>F</b>		855.3	21.7	105.8	18.4
<b>p-value</b>		<0.001	<0.001	<0.001	<0.001

Degrees of freedom = 4



### **Sociodemographic correlates of scores on components of ‘ethnicity’**

This section explores the relationship between these components of ethnicity and other potential influences on ethnic affiliation, using multivariate analyses exploring associations between the individual scores on the different components of ethnic identity determined using the principal components analyses (for each ethnic group separately) and different demographic and socioeconomic characteristics. Following on from the previous section, these analyses suggest ways in which sociodemographic characteristics may affect the manifestation of ethnicity – how far an individual’s particular experience may be considered to conform to a particular conceptualisation of ‘ethnicity’.

Ethnic differences in the distributions of the different independent indicators explored are described in table 20. In particular, relatively few of the South Asian group were born in Britain: particularly those with Bangladeshi and Indian origin, the majority of whom migrated aged 16 years or older. There are relatively large numbers of the Pakistani and, particularly, Bangladeshi population without any formal qualifications and also high levels of economic inactivity among these groups. As perhaps suggested by these figures, there is an ethnic difference in social class position: with white British, Irish and Indian households more likely to occupy social classes I and II, followed by Black Caribbean and Pakistani households, with fewer than one in ten Bangladeshi households in these social classes. Black Caribbean and, particularly, Bangladeshi people were relatively less likely to own their places of residence. Irish and Bangladeshi people were less likely to live in suburban areas. Irish and white British people were more likely to live in rural and predominantly white areas, compared with other groups.

Tables 21 through 24 explore the similarities and differences in the associations between individual scores on the separate components of ethnicity and the different demographic and socioeconomic indicators for the different ethnic minority groups explored. Due to the differences in the findings of the principal components analysis for the white British group, this group is discussed separately (table 25).

Table 21 presents the findings of the multivariate analyses exploring associations between the different demographic and socioeconomic characteristics explored and the ‘enculturation’ component. These findings suggested that scores on this dimension were statistically significantly higher for Indian women, and for Bangladeshi, Black Caribbean and Irish migrants and Indian and Pakistani people who had migrated when they were older than age 15 (compared with those who had been born in Britain). Having higher (rather than no) educational qualifications was associated with lower scores on this component for Indian people. Lower scores on this component were also associated with living in rural areas for Irish and, particularly, Black Caribbean people, compared with those living in urban areas. There

**Table 20: Distribution of variables included in the sociodemographic analyses, by ethnic group.**

	Per cents					
	Ethnic group					
	white British	Irish	Caribbean	Bangladeshi	Indian	Pakistani
<b>Gender</b>						
Male	44	45	40	48	49	47
Female	56	55	60	52	51	53
<i>weighted bases</i>	837	733	694	650	643	724
<b>Age at migration</b>						
Born in the UK	100	76	52	15	28	36
Migrated aged 10 or less	0	4	8	20	13	12
Migrated aged 11-15	0	1	9	11	10	10
Migrated aged 16 or over	0	19	32	54	49	43
<i>weighted bases</i>	830	731	692	641	641	718
<b>Highest qualification gained</b>						
None	25	27	30	64	27	45
Foreign or other qualification	4	5	4	3	3	4
GCSE/O' level	31	28	30	19	23	26
A' level or above	41	40	37	15	46	25
<i>weighted bases</i>	807	719	674	626	629	694
<b>Employment status</b>						
Economically active	72	74	62	26	68	39
Unemployed	2	1	4	9	3	4
Sick, retired or in education	16	14	23	21	16	24
Looking after the home	10	11	11	44	12	32
<i>weighted bases</i>	719	611	548	558	558	640
<b>Household social class</b>						
I or II	45	37	25	9	38	22
III <sub>n</sub>	14	10	17	6	9	11
III <sub>m</sub>	26	31	30	36	29	37
IV or V	16	22	28	49	23	30
<i>weighted bases</i>	824	725	660	555	623	637
<b>Housing tenure</b>						
Owner occupier	81	76	54	28	87	76
Rented	19	24	46	72	13	24
<i>weighted bases</i>	745	690	670	608	605	688
<b>Urbanisation of residential area</b>						
Urban	18	76	48	88	27	41
Suburban	57	2	52	12	72	59
Rural	25	21	0	0	1	0
<i>weighted bases</i>	751	696	671	614	616	696
<b>Ethnic mix of residents in local area</b>						
Local residents predominantly white	83	76	27	5	39	13
Residents predominantly ethnic minority	0	2	9	34	10	32
Ethnically mixed area	16	21	64	61	51	55
<i>weighted bases</i>	837	733	692	650	641	723

were also lower scores on this component for unemployed or ‘non-employed’ (those in education and the retired or sick) Pakistani people, compared with those who were employed. Interestingly, household social class had a varying effect: associated with lower scores on this component for Black Caribbean people in class IIIn but higher scores for Irish people (also) in class IIIn and Irish and Indian people in class IIIm, compared with those in classes I and II.

Table 22 shows the associations between the different socioeconomic characteristics explored and the ‘community participation’ component. Multivariate analyses suggested that Irish and Black Caribbean people living in suburban and rural areas, Bangladeshi people with British school leaving qualifications, Black Caribbean people with higher educational qualifications and Pakistani people living in ethnically ‘mixed’ areas were statistically significantly more likely to have lower scores on this dimension. Pakistani people who had migrated under the age of 10 and Bangladeshi people living in rented accommodation (rather than being owner occupiers) were statistically significantly more likely to have higher scores on this dimension: as were Bangladeshi people who were not employed and not in a household headed by someone in social classes I or II, Pakistani people who were ‘looking after the home’ and Pakistani people who were in household social class IV or V.

Indian and Pakistani women, Irish people who migrated before age 10 and Black Caribbean and Bangladeshi people who had migrated at age 16 or older all showed statistically significantly lower scores on the dimension exploring being a member of a racialised group (table 23). Indian people with higher educational qualifications, Black Caribbean people living in rural areas and Bangladeshi people living in suburban areas all exhibited higher scores on this component. The ethnicity of local residents, employment status and household occupational class had a varying effect on scores on this dimension according to ethnic group: with Bangladeshi people not living in predominantly white areas having higher scores, but Indian people in predominantly ‘non-white’ areas having lower scores; unemployed Bangladeshi people have higher scores on this component, while Indian and Pakistani people who were ‘looking after the home’ had significantly lower scores, compared with those who were employed; and Bangladeshi people living in households in class IIIm and Black Caribbean people living in households in classes IIIn and IIIm exhibiting lower scores on this dimension while Indian people in IIIn households had higher scores, compared with those living in households in classes I or II.

Women were statistically significantly more likely to have higher scores on the dimension exploring attitudes toward ‘cultural assimilation’, for each ethnic group with the exception of Irish people (table 24). Compared with people born in Britain, Black Caribbean migrants and Indian people who had migrated over the age of ten were also more likely to have higher scores

**Table 21: Associations between the ‘enculturation’ component and socio-demographic characteristics**

	Correlation coefficients (95% confidence intervals)				
	Irish	Black Caribbean	Bangladeshi	Indian	Pakistani
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Female	-0.01 (-0.17,0.15)	-0.10 (-0.30,0.09)	0.08 (-0.30,0.46)	0.34 (0.16,0.53)	-0.03 (-0.30,0.24)
<b>Age</b>	0.02 (-0.03,0.07)	0.03 (-0.02,0.08)	-0.00 (-0.05,0.05)	0.10 (0.05,0.15)	-0.02 (-0.06,0.03)
<b>Age at migration</b>					
Born in the UK	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Under 10 years	0.56 (0.23,0.89)	0.66 (0.27,1.04)	0.67 (0.24,1.10)	-0.11 (-0.40,0.19)	0.01 (-0.39,0.40)
Between 11 and 15 years	1.24 (0.26,2.23)	0.60 (0.24,0.96)	1.13 (0.62,1.65)	-0.17 (-0.54,0.19)	0.31 (-0.06,0.68)
Over 16 years	1.31 (1.04,1.58)	0.76 (0.36,1.16)	0.89 (0.41,1.37)	0.49 (0.19,0.79)	0.66 (0.37,0.94)
<b>Highest qualification</b>					
No formal qualifications	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Foreign/ other qualification	-0.07 (-0.43,0.30)	-0.10 (-0.63,0.42)	0.24 (-0.24,0.71)	-0.05 (-0.52,0.43)	-0.25 (-0.29,0.08)
CSE/GCSE/O' levels	-0.00 (-0.22,0.22)	-0.09 (-0.40,0.22)	0.03 (-0.30,0.37)	-0.27 (-0.51,-0.02)	-0.09 (-0.34,0.15)
Higher education	0.07 (-0.16,0.29)	-0.14 (-0.45,0.17)	-0.41 (-0.82,0.00)	-0.29 (-0.53,-0.05)	-0.06 (-0.31,0.20)
<b>Housing tenure</b>					
Owner occupier	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Renter	-0.15 (-0.35,0.05)	0.10 (-0.11,0.30)	-0.00 (-0.25,0.24)	-0.12 (-0.39,0.15)	0.17 (-0.05,0.38)
<b>Degree of urbanisation</b>					
Urban	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Suburban	-0.21 (-0.49,0.07)	-0.19 (-0.40,0.02)	0.28 (-0.11,0.66)	-0.18 (-0.38,0.02)	-0.03 (-0.21,0.15)
Rural	-0.53 (-0.86,-0.20)	-2.33 (-2.78,-1.89)	-	-0.14 (-0.67,0.39)	-
<b>Ethnic mix of area</b>					
Predominantly white	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Predominantly non-white	-0.42 (-1.12,0.29)	-0.15 (-0.67,0.37)	0.14 (-0.43,0.70)	-0.11 (-0.43,0.21)	0.32 (-0.01,0.66)
Mixed	0.11 (-0.15,0.37)	0.00 (-0.20,0.20)	0.10 (-0.43,0.64)	0.05 (-0.13,0.24)	0.07 (-0.26,0.41)
<b>Employment status</b>					
Employed	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unemployed	0.07 (-0.63,0.77)	-0.26 (-0.73,0.20)	0.11 (-0.27,0.49)	-0.11 (-0.81,0.60)	-0.37 (-0.73,-0.01)
Nonemployed	0.02 (-0.26,0.30)	0.07 (-0.25,0.39)	0.04 (-0.30,0.38)	0.06 (-0.23,0.35)	-0.62 (-0.93,-0.30)
Home	-0.04 (-0.30,0.22)	-0.03 (-0.31,0.24)	0.08 (-0.37,0.54)	0.12 (-0.13,0.38)	-0.06 (-0.37,0.25)
<b>Household social class</b>					
I/II	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
IIIn	0.33 (0.05,0.61)	-0.32 (-0.64,-0.01)	0.15 (-0.43,0.73)	0.08 (-0.20,0.36)	-0.16 (-0.47,0.14)
IIIm	0.21 (0.00,0.41)	-0.15 (-0.39,0.09)	0.24 (-0.22,0.69)	0.27 (0.06,0.47)	0.15 (-0.15,0.46)
IV/V	0.22 (-0.01,0.46)	-0.16 (-0.46,0.14)	0.05 (-0.43,0.53)	0.16 (-0.08,0.40)	0.07 (-0.21,0.35)

**Table 22: Associations between the ‘Community participation’ component and socio-demographic characteristics**

	Correlation coefficients (95% confidence intervals)				
	Irish	Black Caribbean	Bangladeshi	Indian	Pakistani
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Female	-0.16 (-0.35,0.03)	-0.05 (-0.25,0.15)	0.06 (-0.19,0.32)	0.03 (-0.17,0.24)	0.02 (-0.28,0.32)
<b>Age</b>	-0.00 (-0.05,0.04)	-0.03 (-0.07,0.01)	0.00 (-0.04,0.05)	0.03 (-0.03,0.08)	0.02 (-0.03,0.08)
<b>Age at migration</b>					
Born in the UK	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Under 10 years	-0.07 (-0.51,0.37)	-0.43 (-0.87,0.01)	-0.03 (-0.43,0.37)	-0.11 (-0.46,0.25)	0.31 (0.03,0.58)
Between 11 and 15 years	0.28 (-0.31,0.87)	0.09 (-0.23,0.41)	-0.41 (-1.08,0.25)	-0.03 (-0.43,0.37)	0.30 (-0.06,0.66)
Over 16 years	-0.05 (-0.39,0.28)	-0.40 (-0.81,0.02)	-0.13 (-0.59,0.34)	-0.10 (-0.40,0.21)	0.09 (-0.24,0.43)
<b>Highest qualification</b>					
No formal qualifications	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Foreign/ other qualification	0.22 (-0.13,0.58)	-0.53 (-1.11,0.05)	-0.19 (-0.62,0.24)	-0.26 (-0.66,0.13)	-0.44 (-1.07,0.19)
CSE/GCSE/O’ levels	-0.15 (-0.46,0.16)	0.05 (-0.22,0.33)	-0.41 (-0.74,-0.08)	-0.10 (-0.41,0.20)	-0.23 (-0.48,0.02)
Higher education	-0.14 (-0.44,0.15)	-0.29 (-0.57,-0.00)	-0.23 (-0.53,0.07)	-0.00 (-0.32,0.31)	-0.25 (-0.54,0.04)
<b>Housing tenure</b>					
Owner occupier	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Renter	0.05 (-0.19,0.29)	0.09 (-0.13,0.30)	0.28 (0.03,0.53)	-0.14 (-0.47,0.19)	0.01 (-0.22,0.24)
<b>Degree of urbanisation</b>					
Urban	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Suburban	-0.23 (-0.45,-0.01)	-0.05 (-0.26,0.16)	-0.26 (-0.69,0.17)	0.09 (-0.17,0.35)	-0.15 (-0.34,0.04)
Rural	-0.42 (-0.72,-0.12)	-0.34 (-0.84,0.17)	-	0.30 (-0.56,1.17)	-
<b>Ethnic mix of area</b>					
Predominantly white	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Predominantly non-white	-0.57 (-1.29,0.14)	-0.19 (-0.60,0.22)	-0.37 (-0.92,0.18)	0.28 (-0.05,0.62)	-0.22 (-0.49,0.05)
Mixed	-0.10 (-0.37,0.16)	0.04 (-0.18,0.26)	-0.28 (-0.80,0.25)	-0.01 (-0.22,0.19)	-0.30 (-0.54,-0.06)
<b>Employment status</b>					
Employed	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unemployed	0.22 (-0.23,0.67)	0.09 (-0.35,0.52)	0.56 (0.20,0.92)	0.22 (-0.13,0.57)	0.35 (-0.04,0.73)
Nonemployed	-0.23 (-0.52,0.06)	-0.13 (-0.39,0.12)	0.70 (0.36,1.04)	0.13 (-0.12,0.38)	0.02 (-0.30,0.34)
Home	-0.14 (-0.44,0.16)	0.15 (-0.16,0.45)	0.93 (0.54,1.31)	0.12 (-0.23,0.47)	0.37 (0.06,0.68)
<b>Household social class</b>					
I/II	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
IIIa	0.23 (-0.08,0.54)	-0.03 (-0.33,0.27)	0.57 (0.03,1.10)	0.24 (-0.07,0.55)	0.23 (-0.11,0.57)
IIIb	0.08 (-0.15,0.31)	0.06 (-0.19,0.32)	0.53 (0.02,1.04)	0.22 (-0.01,0.46)	0.22 (-0.08,0.52)
IV/V	0.20 (-0.09,0.49)	0.01 (-0.27,0.28)	0.55 (0.05,1.06)	0.18 (-0.10,0.47)	0.38 (0.09,0.67)

**Table 23: Associations between the ‘membership of a racialised group’ component and socio-demographic characteristics**

	Correlation coefficients (95% confidence intervals)				
	Irish	Black Caribbean	Bangladeshi	Indian	Pakistani
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Female	-0.14 (-0.32,0.05)	-0.14 (-0.37,0.09)	0.14 (-0.17,0.45)	-0.32 (-0.52,-0.12)	-0.74 (-0.99,-0.49)
<b>Age</b>	0.04 (-0.01,0.09)	0.02 (-0.05,0.08)	-0.05 (-0.11,0.01)	-0.04 (-0.00,0.08)	0.11 (0.07,0.16)
<b>Age at migration</b>					
Born in the UK	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Under 10 years	-0.35 (-0.68,-0.02)	-0.10 (-0.44,0.24)	-0.06 (-0.58,0.45)	-0.02 (-0.29,0.25)	-0.01 (-0.27,0.26)
Between 11 and 15 years	-0.31 (-0.86,0.25)	-0.13 (-0.49,0.23)	-0.41 (-0.87,0.05)	0.03 (-0.32,0.38)	-0.34 (-0.71,0.02)
Over 16 years	0.25 (-0.08,0.58)	-0.73 (-1.16,-0.30)	-0.47 (-0.92,-0.01)	-0.05 (-0.34,0.23)	0.38 (-0.68,0.09)
<b>Highest qualification</b>					
No formal qualifications	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Foreign/ other qualification	0.28 (-0.18,0.74)	-0.25 (-1.14,0.65)	0.21 (-0.42,0.84)	0.10 (-0.36,0.56)	0.09 (-0.45,0.63)
CSE/GCSE/O’ levels	0.26 (-0.00,0.52)	-0.14 (-0.47,0.19)	-0.09 (-0.46,0.27)	0.23 (-0.03,0.50)	0.08 (-0.15,0.30)
Higher education	0.22 (-0.02,0.47)	-0.17 (-0.50,0.17)	0.07 (-0.29,0.42)	0.49 (0.25,0.73)	0.14 (-0.11,0.39)
<b>Housing tenure</b>					
Owner occupier	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Renter	0.10 (-0.16,0.36)	-0.02 (-0.25,0.20)	-0.23 (-0.48,0.02)	-0.09 (-0.35,0.18)	0.04 (-0.18,0.26)
<b>Degree of urbanisation</b>					
Urban	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Suburban	-0.19 (-0.52,0.14)	-0.16 (-0.39,0.08)	0.50 (0.15,0.84)	-0.09 (-0.32,0.14)	-0.10 (-0.29,0.08)
Rural	-0.22 (-0.62,0.17)	0.55 (0.11,0.99)	-	-0.36 (-0.85,0.14)	-
<b>Ethnic mix of area</b>					
Predominantly white	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Predominantly non-white	-0.22 (-0.58,0.15)	0.22 (-0.25,0.69)	0.36 (0.01,0.71)	-0.39 (-0.72,-0.07)	-0.00 (-0.25,0.25)
Mixed	-0.03 (-0.30,0.25)	0.03 (-0.23,0.30)	0.43 (0.09,0.76)	-0.06 (-0.26,0.15)	0.03 (-0.19,0.25)
<b>Employment status</b>					
Employed	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unemployed	-0.19 (-0.69,0.31)	-0.02 (-0.46,0.42)	0.56 (0.04,1.07)	0.57 (-0.27,1.41)	-0.00 (-0.32,0.31)
Nonemployed	0.11 (-0.24,0.45)	0.07 (-0.29,0.42)	0.12 (-0.31,0.54)	-0.05 (-0.32,0.22)	-0.15 (-0.12,0.43)
Home	-0.02 (-0.33,0.30)	-0.17 (-0.46,0.13)	0.15 (-0.22,0.52)	-0.48 (-0.72,-0.24)	-0.35 (-0.63,-0.07)
<b>Household social class</b>					
I/II	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
IIIIn	-0.13 (-0.42,0.16)	-0.33 (-0.64,-0.02)	-0.50 (-1.08,0.09)	0.42 (0.08,0.75)	0.08 (-0.18,0.34)
IIIIm	-0.09 (-0.33,0.15)	-0.32 (-0.58,-0.06)	-0.72 (-1.19,-0.25)	0.04 (-0.17,0.25)	-0.12 (-0.35,0.10)
IV/V	-0.24 (-0.51,0.04)	-0.23 (-0.55,0.09)	-0.48 (-0.96,0.01)	0.18 (-0.07,0.43)	0.04 (-0.21,0.30)

**Table 24: Associations between the ‘cultural assimilation’ dimension of ‘ethnic identity and socio-demographic characteristics**

	Correlation coefficients (95% confidence intervals)				
	Irish	Black Caribbean	Bangladeshi	Indian	Pakistani
<b>Gender</b>					
Male	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Female	0.00 (-0.19,0.19)	0.23 (0.03,0.43)	0.52 (0.23,0.81)	0.45 (0.25, 0.65)	0.34 (0.09,0.60)
<b>Age</b>	-0.01 (-0.06,0.04)	0.10 (0.05,0.15)	-0.03 (-0.09,0.03)	-0.02 (-0.09,0.04)	-0.01 (-0.06,0.03)
<b>Age at migration</b>					
Born in the UK	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Under 10 years	0.02 (-0.34,0.37)	0.60 (0.30,0.91)	0.14 (-0.20,0.48)	0.21 (-0.16,0.57)	0.04 (-0.27,0.35)
Between 11 and 15 years	-0.10 (-0.87,0.67)	0.46 (0.13,0.79)	0.27 (-0.25,0.79)	0.55 (0.14,0.96)	-0.08 (-0.48,0.31)
Over 16 years	0.30 (-0.00,0.62)	0.71 (0.37,1.04)	0.33 (-0.11,0.76)	0.54 (0.22,0.86)	0.18 (-0.13,0.49)
<b>Highest qualification</b>					
No formal qualifications	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Foreign/ other qualification	0.05 (-0.37,0.46)	0.41 (-0.13,0.95)	0.70 (0.04,1.36)	0.68 (0.11,1.25)	0.06 (-0.42,0.55)
CSE/GCSE/O’ levels	0.14 (-0.15,0.44)	0.14 (-0.17,0.45)	-0.03 (-0.32,0.25)	-0.22 (-0.52,0.08)	-0.13 (-0.39,0.12)
Higher education	0.23 (-0.05,0.52)	0.34 (0.02,0.67)	0.04 (-0.29,0.36)	-0.11 (-0.39,0.17)	-0.23 (-0.49,0.02)
<b>Housing tenure</b>					
Owner occupier	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Renter	0.07 (-0.24,0.38)	0.06 (-0.15,0.26)	-0.20 (-0.44,0.05)	0.45 (0.13,0.77)	0.20 (-0.01,0.41)
<b>Degree of urbanisation</b>					
Urban	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Suburban	-0.08 (-0.45,0.30)	-0.22 (-0.41,-0.02)	0.12 (-0.32,0.56)	0.06 (-0.18,0.31)	-0.06 (-0.26,0.14)
Rural	0.06 (-0.41,0.52)	-0.56 (-0.93,-0.20)	-	0.16 (-0.40,0.73)	-
<b>Ethnic mix of area</b>					
Predominantly white	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Predominantly non-white	0.05 (-0.38,0.48)	0.10 (-0.31,0.50)	-0.32 (-0.90,0.25)	-0.06 (-0.42,0.29)	0.45 (0.17,0.72)
Mixed	0.17 (-0.22,0.56)	-0.05 (-0.23,0.13)	-0.61 (-1.14,-0.09)	0.03 (-0.19,0.24)	0.25 (-0.02,0.51)
<b>Employment status</b>					
Employed	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unemployed	-1.12 (-1.68,-0.57)	0.29 (-0.34,0.93)	0.02 (-0.36,0.40)	-0.11 (-0.70,0.48)	0.35 (-0.03,0.73)
Nonemployed	-0.20 (-0.51,0.12)	0.11 (-0.16,0.39)	-0.04 (-0.45,0.36)	0.04 (-0.33,0.40)	0.02 (-0.26,0.31)
Home	0.11 (-0.28,0.50)	-0.21 (-0.49,0.07)	-0.16 (-0.52,0.20)	-0.08 (-0.42,0.27)	0.33 (0.04,0.62)
<b>Household social class</b>					
I/II	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
IIIIn	-0.09 (-0.34,0.17)	-0.07 (-0.34,0.21)	0.08 (-0.44,0.59)	-0.14 (-0.56,0.28)	-0.50 (-0.83,-0.18)
IIIIm	-0.04 (-0.29,0.20)	-0.09 (-0.33,0.14)	0.22 (-0.19,0.63)	0.06 (-0.18,0.31)	-0.26 (-0.54,0.02)
IV/V	-0.17 (-0.49,0.16)	0.06 (-0.22,0.33)	0.22 (-0.19,0.64)	-0.01 (-0.26,0.25)	-0.31 (-0.60,-0.03)

on this component. As were Bangladeshi and Indian people with foreign/‘other’ qualifications and Black Caribbean people with higher educational qualifications, compared with those with no qualifications. Indian people who rented their accommodation were more likely to have higher scores on this dimension than Indian owner occupiers, as were Pakistani people who lived in predominantly non-white (compared with predominantly white) areas and those who were ‘looking after the home’, compared with those who were employed. Black Caribbean people not living in urban areas and Pakistani people who were living in households in social classes III<sub>n</sub>, IV or V were more likely to have lower scores on this dimension of ethnic identity. Irish people who were unemployed and Bangladeshi people who were living in ethnically mixed (compared with predominantly white) areas were also significantly more likely to have lower scores on this dimension.

Table 25 shows the results of a multivariate analysis to explore the relationship between the different dimensions of ‘ethnicity’ found for the white British group and other potential influences on ethnic affiliation, including other aspects of identity. Independent of the effects of the other variables included in the models, there were statistically significant associations between:

- Migrating and higher scores on the components exploring participating in communities containing a high proportion of people from ethnic minority groups and being a member of a racialised group; while
- being in a social class other than RG I or II was associated with lower scores on the component exploring attitudes towards ethnic integration.
- Renting your accommodation was associated with higher scores on the component exploring member of a racialised group, while living in an ‘ethnically-mixed’ area was associated with lower scores on the component exploring community participation.
- Having qualifications at GCSE/O’ level or above was associated with higher scores on the component exploring attitudes towards ethnic integration and lower scores on the component exploring community participation. Having higher educational qualifications was also associated with higher scores on the component exploring being a member of a racialised group.



**Table 25: Associations between ethnic components and socio-demographic characteristics:  
white British group only**

	Correlation coefficients (95% confidence intervals)		
	<b>Ethnic integration</b>	<b>Community participation</b>	<b>Member of a racialised group</b>
<b>Gender</b>			
Male	0.00	0.00	0.00
Female	0.16 (-0.01,0.33)	-0.04 (-0.21,0.13)	-0.07 (-0.25,0.11)
<b>Age</b>	0.00 (-0.04,0.04)	0.04 (-0.01,0.08)	0.00 (-0.05,0.05)
<b>Age at migration</b>			
Born in the UK	0.00	0.00	0.00
Under 10 years	-0.05 (-0.35,0.25)	0.38 (0.07,0.68)	1.42 (1.09,1.76)
Between 11 and 15 years	-	-	-
Over 16 years	-	-	-
<b>Highest qualification</b>			
No qualifications	0.00	0.00	0.00
Foreign/ other qualification	0.14 (-0.24,0.52)	-0.20 (-0.56,0.16)	0.19 (-0.26,0.64)
CSE/GCSE/O' levels	0.31 (0.05,0.56)	-0.42 (-0.63,-0.22)	0.22 (-0.03,0.47)
Higher education	0.59 (0.32,0.85)	-0.65 (-0.89,-0.42)	0.46 (0.19,0.73)
<b>Housing tenure</b>			
Owner occupier	0.00	0.00	0.00
Renter	0.04 (-0.20,0.29)	0.00 (-0.24,0.24)	0.30 (0.02,0.58)
<b>Degree of urbanisation</b>			
Urban	0.00	0.00	0.00
Suburban	-0.06 (-0.31,0.19)	-0.06 (-0.35,0.22)	-0.13 (-0.41,0.14)
Rural	-0.11 (-0.39,0.18)	-0.10 (-0.41,0.20)	-0.24 (-0.53,0.05)
<b>Ethnic mix of area</b>			
Predominantly white	0.00	0.00	0.00
Predominantly non-white	-0.20 (-1.70,1.31)	-0.14 (-0.51,0.22)	0.18 (-1.97,2.33)
Mixed	0.09 (-0.15,0.33)	-0.44 (-0.76,-0.13)	0.23 (-0.06,0.53)
<b>Employment status</b>			
Employed	0.00	0.00	0.00
Unemployed	0.12 (-0.57,0.81)	-0.42 (-1.32,0.46)	0.57 (-0.27,1.41)
Nonemployed	0.17 (-0.07,0.42)	-0.14 (-0.44,0.15)	0.22 (-0.11,0.56)
Home	-0.01 (-0.25,0.23)	0.14 (-0.14,0.42)	0.04 (-0.23,0.31)
<b>Household social class</b>			
I/II	0.00	0.00	0.00
III <sub>n</sub>	-0.36 (-0.61,-0.10)	-0.11 (-0.36,0.14)	0.15 (-0.12,0.41)
III <sub>m</sub>	-0.30 (-0.50,-0.10)	0.16 (-0.05,0.36)	0.13 (-0.07,0.34)
IV/V	-0.36 (-0.63,-0.08)	-0.12 (-0.37,0.13)	-0.05 (-0.33,0.23)

## Summary and conclusions

These findings suggest that the process of ethnic affiliation follows similar patterns regardless of broadly-defined ethnic status, although the meaning of particular aspects of 'ethnicity' (in general and in comparison to the lived experience of particular individuals) would appear to vary, both within and between groups. In light of the findings from the separate ethnic group models it would seem that there are three broad dimensions of 'ethnicity': related to attitudes towards cultural integration; racialisation; and community participation. A key finding is the similarity of component loadings across the different ethnic groups, including that of the 'ethnic majority'. Although the distribution of scores differed between the ethnic minority groups included, the similarity in the loadings across them would suggest that the basic components of ethnicity are considered broadly similar by people from different ethnic minority groups in England. And the similarity of these findings and those from the analysis of the white British group would suggest that this overlap in the process of ethnic identification may operate regardless of differences in numerical, political or socioeconomic power. It is also important to remember, here, that while particular indicators have been included to explore the existence of underlying dimensions of ethnicity, these components are greater than the sum of their parts: such that other measures (exploring attitudes towards cultural integration, racialisation and community participation) can be meaningfully incorporated into this understanding of the processes of ethnic identification, as shall be explored in the qualitative analyses.

Although in the white British model the dimension exploring attitudes towards cultural integration formed one components of ethnicity; in the ethnic minority group models this dimension formed two components: Component 1, enculturation, exploring the 'promotion' (or preservation) of ethnic difference through (continued) adherence to beliefs and practices which could be seen to be traditional to an ethnic group, and Component 4, exploring feelings about and attitudes towards cultural assimilation. That these two components could be seen, in some way, to be exploring a similar aspect of ethnic identity is also supported by the statistical associations between Components 1 and 4 found in the Black Caribbean, Bangladeshi, Pakistani and Indian models.

Component 1, in the ethnic minority group models, given the working title of 'enculturation' – defined as a process of engaging in living out a group's traditional cultural norms and values – combined items related to wearing clothes which present a link with a particular ethnic group, speaking languages other than English, describing less support for ethnically-mixed marriages, perceiving oneself to be 'Asian', 'Caribbean' or 'Irish' and expressing a belief that people from ethnic minority groups should preserve their 'traditional' culture and way of life, in opposition to the influence of other lifestyles in Britain. This aspect of ethnic identification could be considered to operate as a boundary of inclusion, providing an internal sense of identity which

operates independently of the attitudes of external audiences. But there are also elements that involve presentation of an image to the external audience. Importantly, an argument related to maintaining to 'traditional' customs or attitudes as part of daily, or past (as a form of upbringing, for example), life could be considered an important means to justify a particular mode of identification – both to people who might be considered part of your ethnic community or not. This dimension of ethnicity also allows for the effects of 'acculturation', although it is important to recognise, as discussed earlier, that in this context 'acculturation' does not imply a 'loss' of culture, or the adoption of a majority culture. Rather, in this sense 'acculturation' is related to reduced participation in customs seen as traditional to an ethnic group and a consequent shift in what being *of* that group means to the individual (or group) or how far this might be considered a meaningful aspect of your own appreciation of your ethnic status. What is key is that an appreciation of the maintenance of customs may be one way in which a particular form of 'ethnicity' is operationalised, rather than the particular meaning in terms of the particular customs with which that identification is considered, and their origin.

There was a statistically significant variation in scores on this component by ethnic group, with Irish and Black Caribbean respondents having lower scores than people from the different South Asian groups explored. Despite this variation in scores, though, the consistent presentation of this as an aspect of ethnic identification suggests that ideas of 'traditionality' are an important dimension of ethnic appreciation for each of the ethnic groups explored. The variations in scores on this component according to various sociodemographic circumstances were in some senses not surprising: women and migrants significantly more likely to have higher scores on this component and therefore potentially more likely to consider this a meaningful aspect of their ethnic identity and those with educational qualifications and the not-employed having lower scores. Those not living in urban areas also had lower scores on this component, perhaps suggesting more (concern regarding) negative responses in areas where ethnic minority groups are less populous; although it may be that it is perceived ethnic integration/assimilation which promotes the ability or desire to move to rural areas, rather than the reverse. In perhaps a similar way, those who were not working may perceive the negative effects of a lack of 'integration' on their employment prospects.

Component 2, related to community participation, could also be considered to reflect a boundary of inclusion. However, unlike component 1, which may, to some extent, be described as 'unreflective' (Smaje 1996) – the wider social significance of such practices and attitudes remaining unrecognised – the perceived need to establish ethnically-identified groups would suggest both a response to exclusion by wider society and a positive celebration of ethnic group membership, as a form of politicised identity. Again there was a statistically significant variation in scores on this component by ethnic group: with Irish, Black Caribbean and Indian

respondents having lower scores than Bangladeshi and Pakistani people. There were also significantly higher scores on this component among migrants, those living in rented accommodation and those in lower social classes. Lower scores on this component were related to being employed, owning your accommodation, coming from a household in social classes I or II, living in suburban, rural and ethnically mixed areas (including for the white British group) and having education qualifications.

Component 3, reflecting a more politicised, or racialised, form of ethnic appreciation, is a more obvious indicator of external influences on ethnic identification. It could be argued that those who acknowledge this aspect of their 'ethnicity' will have recognised their ethnic status as key in structuring their interactions with the, particularly, ethnic majority, and their position in society more generally, perhaps even that their position as a "minoritized" (Gunaratnam 2003:21) group is of more importance than the ethnic dimension to this exploitation. The commonalities in experiences among members of the groups critical for this as a process of identification. The ethnic differences in scores on this component follow the ethnic differences in the reporting of experiences and perceptions of racism found here, and elsewhere (Virdee 1997). While the lower rates of racist experiences reported by Irish people is not surprising, the similarly low rates reported by Bangladeshi people seem curious. Lower rates of reported racism among this group have been found elsewhere, however, and it is suggested that this may be a consequence of the geographical concentration of the British Bangladeshi population, which reduces the risk of 'low level' racial harassment (Virdee 1997). It is also interesting that the Black Caribbean group were more likely to report experiences of racism, with over a third of Black Caribbean respondents reporting being refused a job on the grounds of skin colour, religion or racial/ethnic background at some time. As migrants were also statistically significantly more likely to have lower scores on this component, it may be argued that these findings support Bobo's (1999) discussion of the impact of ethnic alienation, where more recent (and 'voluntarily incorporated') ethnic minority groups feel less alienated than those who are longer resident (and 'involuntarily incorporated'): increased length of residence allowing greater recognition of the persistence, pervasiveness and extremity of ethnic inequities and racial discrimination and therefore the increased relevance of this as a form of ethnic (group) identification.

Women were also more likely to have lower scores on this component, perhaps supporting previous findings that women are more likely to internalise their experiences of racist victimisation (Armstead et al 1989, Taylor et al 1990, Ruggiero and Taylor 1995, 1997), losing a group-wide nature of their experiences. Having been born in the UK (with the exception of the white British group), having educational qualifications and living in suburban and rural areas was associated with higher scores on this component, suggesting both the influence of greater

awareness of and greater exposure to racist victimisation. That unemployment was associated with higher, and looking after the home associated with lower scores on this component might also support an exposure effect. The decision to report yourself to be looking after the home rather than unemployed may also be a political one, however, and perhaps associated with the internalisation of discrimination or of the impact of a loss of self-esteem and the associated hopelessness of a solution via more political and organised means. Alternatively, believing yourself to be unemployed as a consequence of discrimination may offer a strategy to deal with racism which removes a sense of personal inadequacy.

Component 4 in the ethnic minority group models explores other (perhaps less aggressive) issues associated with being a member of a minority group and how this sense of threat may in itself promote a sense of your ethnicity. It explores the extent to which respondents felt themselves to be 'British', whether they felt that their way of life and 'minority culture' were being assimilated into and replaced by that of the ethnic 'majority', and attitudes towards this and the interrelationship between different cultures in 'multi-cultural' society. South Asian groups had significantly lower scores on this component compared with Black Caribbean and Irish people. Lower scores on this component were also associated with not living in urban areas – integration a prerequisite for living, or demanded by those already resident, outside the city – and living in households headed by someone in a lower occupational class, again perhaps a consequence of the internalisation of the integrationist demands of this form of occupation, or other aspects of this lifestyle. Women, migrants, those with higher educational qualifications and those living in rented accommodation were more likely to have higher scores on this component, partly, perhaps, because these demands are felt more keenly by these groups (as suggested above by their simultaneously 'more enculturative' practices) but also perhaps because education brings awareness of the enculturative tendencies of others.

The variation in component scores could also support an argument for the similarity in the experience of people from ethnic minority groups (and to some extent the 'ethnic majority') in terms of the meaning of 'ethnicity'. Although there were statistically significant differences in the distribution of component scores across the different ethnic minority groups; the fact that they consistently emerged for each group and the degree of overlap between distributions suggests that there is a broad similarity in the meaning (as well as the 'within-group' variation in the meaning) of these aspects in an appreciation of ethnicity. Indeed, differences for the component that showed the largest 'between-group' variation, Component 1 (enculturation), may be a result of Black Caribbean and Irish people not having the same types of 'opportunity' as Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi people to present themselves as members of an ethnic minority group: and therefore partly an artefact of the data collection process, rather than it being a less important signifier. Only thirteen per cent of Black Caribbean and six per cent of

Irish people compared with over 90 per cent of Pakistani, Indian and Bangladeshi people spoke a language other than English, for example. People from South Asian groups were also more likely to report minding 'very much' if a close relative were to marry someone from a different ethnic group, although they were only slightly more likely to agree with the statement regarding the need for people from ethnic minority groups to preserve their culture and way of life. This lack of opportunity may also explain why there was only one dimension of 'multiculturalism' in the white British only model, which meant that certain questions were not asked of this group. Alternatively, the power of the white British group in Britain may mean that their appreciation of their ethnicity is relatively unsophisticated, compared with that of people from ethnic minority groups. Further evidence, perhaps, of the importance of the external audience for ethnic appreciation. The similarity in the findings across the different ethnic groups does not imply, however, that different ethnic groups experience, for example, the same rates or the same type of racism (Modood 1996), rather that experiences of racism have a similar impact on an appreciation of ethnic status.

While I believe these findings appear convincing in terms of their application to earlier work; there are a number of problems associated with both these analysis, and analyses of this type. Racism and ethnic identity are multidimensional and historically located concepts which can be only partially captured by a cross-sectional quantitative survey. Some of the components included a small number of outcomes, which may be particularly problematic when conducting principal component analyses (Dunteman 1989). And these limitations can be seen in the relatively low Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients for the key variables clustering under some of the components, which suggest a lack of variability in outcomes for some indicators. Although the eigenvalues and scree plots give some reassurance as to the validity of the findings, these limitations would suggest a need for caution when interpreting them. More importantly, the social meanings and personal significance of the identity questions included in the analyses can not be covered in the measurement, so cannot be read directly off of the data. We also cannot establish what might be considered the important criteria in the recognition of any of these aspects of ethnic identification, and how these are negotiated. These data also cannot account for the way that ethnic definitions shift, either in different contexts or over time, although the findings do suggest that there is some aspect of these components of ethnicity which maintains relevance, regardless of these mutations. Nor can it account for the variations in the degree of importance which individuals ascribe to the influence of their ethnicity on their self-concept: in itself and in relation to other aspects of their character. In addition, the ethnic groupings used for the analysis contain individuals with culturally diverse origins. It remains possible that the necessary inclusion of diverse ethnic groups within the quantitatively determined ethnic categories used might have obscured important differences between ethnic groups in both variable loadings on particular components and the distribution of scores

between different ethnic groups. Fortunately, we can explore some of these issues in more depth using the qualitative data.

While we must bear in mind the earlier comment that 'ethnicity' is in no way predetermined, objective or absolute, the quantitative findings suggest ways in which 'ethnicity' may be considered to be assessed according to a number of sets of markers. It suggests that individuals from different ethnic groups in England identify with their ethnic group according to a number of dimensions which exhibit remarkable consistency, regardless of characteristics related to skin colour or nationality (etc). Being a member of an ethnic group in England means similar things to people from different ethnic groups, such that 'ethnicity' could be defined according to similar themes by people considered to be members of different ethnic groups. And we can also see how individual characteristics, consistent with an idea of internal agency, and more structural (or external) factors may influence the development and recognition of an ethnic identification. So while, in theory, 'ethnicity' may have the potential to be anything to anyone, the need to negotiate this meaning and the power to define others would seem to ensure the ongoing relevance of particular modes of ethnic definition. Establishing groupness, as an inclusive or exclusive group, also requires the use of preordained criteria, again requiring negotiation between members and non-members and therefore a potential lack of freedom to choose, potentially, to be a member, or to not. These findings suggest that how you are treated by wider society has important implications for your sense of self. And that while individual agency would appear to play a role in the development of particular aspects of ethnic identification, it may operate more as a reaction to a particular social environment rather than as an independent influence on how you view yourself. Components 3 ('racialisation') and 4 ('cultural assimilation') give a clear indication of the importance of external or structural factors in the development of ethnic identity. The findings for components 1 ('enculturation') and 2 ('community participation') could also suggest the operation of a reaction to external stimuli.

While there appear to be some grounds for arguing that particular groups may be more similar, or less different, than others in terms of their understanding of the meaning of their ethnicity, on the whole the variable loadings and individual component scores speak more of the similarity of forms of ethnic identification across groups, but also of the wide variation in the extent to which certain members of particular ethnic groups conform to a similar manifestation of a particular dimensions of 'ethnicity'. While some may be considered very 'traditional' in their attitudes and lifestyle, other are not, but it does not necessarily follow, however, that the importance of this aspect of their ethnic awareness will similarly vary. For people with less 'traditional' lifestyles, the appreciation of this aspect of their 'ethnicity' may come from their recognition of the more traditional lifestyles of those around them, and the messages they absorb from the external (if same-'ethnic') community regarding the importance of such a

lifestyle for a particular manifestation of their 'ethnicity'. The separation of the racialisation and cultural assimilation components in the quantitative analysis is informative in suggesting that a recognition of the politicised and victimised nature of your relationship with the society you live in may not necessarily be a prerequisite for recognising a need to react to demands for integration.

Despite the various limitations, I feel that the findings from the quantitative data have been informative in terms of determining *in what ways* ethnicity might be considered meaningful to people from different ethnic groups in England and to establish that these modes of ethnic identification have meaning in a statistically meaningful way and, regardless of the extent to which an individual's own lived experience may conform to (all of) these ideas of what 'ethnicity' is or might be. What we need to determine now is why, as well as how these different forms of ethnic appreciation play out in people's lives.



## **Chapter 4      Qualitative discussions of potential definitions of ‘ethnicity’**

The aim of the qualitative aspect of this investigation is to explore whether, why and in what ways ethnicity forms an important part of the social identity of people from different ethnic groups in England at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century. This chapter will explore respondents’ discussions of what ‘ethnicity’ is (or might be), particularly what people might consider to be useful criteria for the allocation of a particular ethnic label, or an appreciation of ‘ethnicity’ or ethnic group membership. This chapter will therefore explore what ‘ethnicity’ might entail in a more abstract sense: whether it may be informed by multiple or fewer considerations and whether certain of these characteristics might hold higher, even ultimate, significance in terms of the allocation of a particular ethnic label, and why. This chapter is organised into a number of sections to reflect these discussions, exploring: the impact of multiple influences; the role of birthplace, socialisation and lifestyle; the influence of religion; the importance of ‘blood’; and the affect of who you are considered, by yourself and others, not to be.

### **The impact of multiple influences on ethnic identification**

Respondents, particularly those who had higher (post-18 years) educational qualifications, indicated that a range of criteria should be considered in assessments of ethnic affiliation:

*[you selected Indian, can you just tell me why?] that's what I am. Well, my whole way of life, where I was born, my cultural background...it's a whole range of things.. it's not just obviously where you were born ... it's more your sort of cultural identity as well as, you know, it's the physical aspect as well...Indian blood...our roots are back in India... Most people would actually perceive ethnicity as a very sort of physical thing, initially, obviously it's what you look like* (CL08, Indian woman, aged 38, moved to GB aged 4)

*ethnic identity, I think you're asking me where I hail from, aren't you, what my nationality is and maybe my religion...I'm British* (EX33, Irish male, aged 34, born in GB)

Although some respondents felt one aspect of their ‘ethnicity’ to be of ultimate significance, many people felt decisions about ethnic affiliation should be based on the interrelationship of multiple influences: particularly place of birth and the extent to which an individual’s upbringing and lifestyle could be considered ‘traditional’. As the first quote above suggests, these various dimensions could be considered as forming two aspects of ‘ethnicity’: a more physical aspect – including place of birth, “*what you look like*” and ‘blood’ – and a psychological aspect, or identity. Rather than these different options suggesting a single, static ethnic ascription, though, respondents felt that it was possible to define yourself in a number of ways depending on which criteria you chose:

*I see myself as British...I don't see myself as Irish origin at all...my mum I see as English now or British because she has been here, what 40-odd years, you know, so I don't see her as Irish but I know both my parents are Irish, you know, and that's their origins, my origins I feel are British...obviously technical Irish, I see myself as a British citizen*

(LA20, Irish female, aged 33, born in GB)

For this respondent, both her and her parents' ethnic affiliation could be redefined according to the definition employed: them both being *technically* 'Irish', as a consequence of their ancestry, but also 'British' in terms of place and length of residence, lifestyle and attitudes. Ethnic affiliations were also often recognised in relation to a mythical, even romantic sense of what being one of those people means and particularly how this varied from being something/someone else. Contrary to the expectations engendered by the labels used (which tended to be geographically-based), however, it did not appear that ethnic identification was necessarily associated with a particular place.

*I do like the idea of being Irish, although not particularly Northern Irish or anything but just Irish in general...I feel the way about Belfast [where I grew up] that say maybe some people feel about sort of coming from Barnsley or something, you know, that they're English, you know, they just don't like the idea that they come from this horrible grey...provincial backwater... which I think Belfast is really, essentially.*

(NT23, Irish female, aged 40, moved to GB aged 19)

### **The role of birthplace, socialisation and lifestyle**

For some respondents birthplace was the overriding factor in selecting an ethnic label: not having "*emigrated over here*" (A33) an important influence on this decision, regardless (as the following quotations display) of the gravity with which this decision is treated.

*if you're born in Pakistan, you know, therefore you still have the love of that country in your heart, you know, you can't forget that...England, that's our home now...you still feel a loyalty to England but you can't forget where you were born*

(LA63, Pakistani male, aged 37, moved to GB aged 11)

*I would just say I'm English, you know, but like I say not in any sort of massively proud way, just an accident of birth, it's where I happened to be*

(LN127, Irish male, aged 44, born in GB)

For some, birthplace could supersede an alternative, potentially important, basis for ethnic identification. This respondent described herself as "*English with Irish heritage*" but said:

*The Irish connection, even though I was born in England is very very strong very - well, I feel more Irish than I do English.*

(NT18, Irish female, aged 47, born in GB)

As a consequence of the perceived importance of place of birth, migrants could consider their ethnic affiliation to be different from that of their children, who had been born in Britain. As one “Pakistani” respondent commented: “[my] children were born here... they’re British” (BM52). But while many respondents therefore disputed whether their parents’ ethnic affiliation should be the overriding influence on their own, others felt parental and ancestral ethnicity to be of ultimate importance.

*my mum and dad are Irish and their mum and dad are Irish and, like, their ancestors are Irish, so I’m Irish*

(CL26, Irish female, aged 29, moved to GB aged 1)

The children of BM52, above, also responded to his comments on their ‘Britishness’: “I always say you’re British...you’re born here, they say ‘no, Dad, you’re Pakistani, I’m Pakistani’”.

As shown by the opening quotations of this chapter, culture and upbringing were also considered very important in ‘placing’ your ‘ethnicity’: the idea of ‘coming’ or “hailing” from a place therefore involving more than simply birthplace, and closely related to parental and ancestral ‘ethnicity’. The cultural influences on your early socialisation were believed to influence your sense of what is ‘right’ or ‘normal’ for the rest of your life:

*I think that goes back to the fact that when you first learnt something, that's what feels comfortable*

(NT18, Irish female, aged 47, born in GB)

Interestingly, perceived opportunities for being ‘brought up’ in a particular cultural environment were related to heritage: having a particular ethnically-specific upbringing only accessible to those with the relevant parentage. An ‘Irish Polish American’ respondent, for example, expecting to have had an ‘Irish’ or ‘Polish’, but not an ‘American’, ‘upbringing’ as her parents had been ‘Polish’ and ‘Irish’, despite having lived in America as a child (BM28).

*if you’re brought up by Irish parents... you’re going to be brought up in an Irish way.*

(LN120, Irish male, aged 46, born in GB)

Although simply living in a particular (wider) cultural “environment” produced a particular ‘cultural influence’ (BM28) on your life and your ethnic affiliation.

*...is the family effect as well and also environmental effect, because I am living in this society I consider myself as Indian/English as well, it's partially English because of the environmental factors as well.* (WY03, Indian female, aged 45, moved to GB aged 24)

So, length of residence in a country and its consequent impact on your lifestyle was an important consideration in the recognition of an ethnic identity.

*I consider myself British because I come from Northern Ireland and I've been away nearly 30 years so I don't have a lot of roots really* (LA21, Irish female, aged 33, born in GB)

One respondent with Caribbean heritage considered herself 'English' as a consequence of her lifestyle which had developed as a consequence of being born and brought up in England: to the extent that she believed that if her children were to ever be fostered it would be more appropriate for them to be placed with a white family:

*I know they couldn't cope in a Black West Indian home. The language is new, they don't even understand their granddad, you know. The food would be different, you know, and just the way, you know, people live, the West Indian culture and the English culture is very different.* (BM13, Black Caribbean female, aged 42, born in GB)

'Ethnicity' was described as a "way of life" (CL08), or, as another respondent put it, "all this cultural crap that we live in" (LA81). People talked about their culture influencing the food they ate, the way they dressed and spoke (including language, accent and phraseology), their 'lifestyle' and 'attitude', and their social interactions and roles.

[ethnic identity] *it's mostly through living with my parents so we're Indian, we do that...we have this way of eating...this way of doing stuff* (LN117, Indian male, aged 36, born in GB)

But as the discussions of the effect of 'environment' would suggest, LN117, and others, describe how these traditions adapt as a consequence of living in Britain: "it's not really an Indian life, it's kind of what Indian ought to be in England." (LN117). These comments offer an insight into the role of these supposed 'traditions' in ethnic identification. If such practices can adapt, perhaps even to the extent that they are no longer meaningful in India, for example, their role in the process of ethnic identification is likely to be at least partially related to a British-based process of group identification and the opportunities for ethnic expression available in Britain. And potentially in response to external motivators, particularly, perhaps, in terms of establishing what Indian "ought" to be. There was other evidence to suggest that apparent 'cultural traditions' might not be as traditional as they would first appear:

*I used to speak perfect English and my mum used to say I'm not English and she used to whack me, you've got to learn to speak your way, so now I speak...halfway between [English and Jamaican Creole]* (BM14, Black Caribbean male, aged 41, moved to GB aged 10)

There was also a sense that the adoption of particular behaviours could be directly related to the perceived salience of a particular identity and the presentation of this to an external audience, rather than the reverse. LA17, for example, described going travelling aged 19:

*that was a big learning curve, I came back with this Afro, I was like preaching to everybody and ...saying, look, as Black people we have to be more [better] role models*  
(LA17, Black Caribbean male, aged 26, born in GB)

So this new awareness of his ethnic identity associated with his sense of himself as a Black 'role model' found visual representation in his hair style. LN113 also expresses a wish for her son to learn Hindi, because "*it's an important part of the way he is seen by people*", even if this ethnicity is unimportant to his own self-concept.

For some people, in different ethnic groups, being born in one country but brought up in another produced dual influences on their appreciation of their ethnicity, and encouraged the use of hybrid labels.

*We describe ourselves as British Indians but the Indian is always going to be there, and the British is always going to be there because we've that identity now*  
(LA40, Indian woman, aged 35, moved to GB aged 3)

One respondent felt that the multiple influences on her 'ethnicity' – being 'English', while having an 'English' mother and an 'Irish' father, and the cultural influences associated with living in a number of different countries – made her "*a true Londoner*" (LN128). For others, there was a recognition that someone's ethnic affiliation or choice of ethnic label could be different from their perceived cultural and ancestral background.

[So if I asked your children who weren't born in Pakistan which box they'd tick, which do you think?] *Probably England, I think.* [And how do you feel about that?] *No, I feel alright about that, I mean as long as they don't forget their culture and, you know, where their parents are from.*  
(LA63, Pakistani male, aged 37, moved to GB aged 11)

One respondent, for example, described himself as 'Black British' but also discussed his cultural inheritance as a 'Jamaican' person, saying:

*I think it's completely different from here...I don't know anybody [in Britain] that, like, think how I think about certain stuff* (LN89, Black Caribbean male, aged 32, born in GB)

### **The influence of religion**

For some Muslim respondents, there was a variation in label use associated with a perception that their 'culture' was religious, while their ethnicity, if one was recognised at all, was grounded in geographically-affiliated heritage.

*It doesn't make to me any difference [how I'm labelled], I'm Bangladeshi or British. [But which culture then you want to follow?] Of course I follow my own culture, Muslim.* (LN46, Bangladeshi female, aged 35, moved to GB aged 16)

Interestingly, all the people with Irish heritage who reported having no religious affiliation described their ethnicity as either 'mixed' or British/English, or disputed whether they had an 'ethnicity' as all. The exception, NT23, was very unhappy with the perceived xenophobia of the British and her self-definition as 'Irish' was related to this, but she described her appreciation of the secular nature of life in Britain.<sup>13</sup>

Many people, from a variety of religious groups, felt it was important that their children receive a religious education, often as well as learning non-English languages (as appropriate) and being educated in more 'English' settings. This attitude supports a view of the importance of religion as a form of social identity. A religious education was considered, by people with different religious backgrounds, to provide children with a "discipline" which was particularly important during "the teenage years when there's a lot of other influences on them" (LN120). Having a religious element to a child's upbringing was considered to give them a "good grounding" (BM16) and "morals...it does try and teach you certain things about life and what you shouldn't do and what you can do, what you shouldn't do to other people" (EX19). But it was also important as a means of cultural transference:

*when you go to Mosque they teach you...what you should be taught at that age, respect and about your own culture* (LA63, Pakistani male, aged 37, moved to GB aged 11)

Having a religious upbringing in itself was seen as an important part of the "Irish thing" [culture]: "Lots of children I went to school with came from similar backgrounds as mine, Anglo-Irish Catholic families, so that's to do with it as well." (LN127). For some, ensuring that

your children participated in this religious learning was becoming increasingly difficult as a consequence of the influence of British lifestyles: evidence of the “*other [cultural] influences*” on the lives of those in “*the teenage years*” described above:

*The youngest ones, they want to go [to the Mosque] now, they do, you know, and they're quite keen to learn but my eldest daughters, you know, I mean at home I force them to read Koran, the Bible, and pray, you know, they're not very willing. And that's another thing in this country, there's too much influence, you know, Western culture and that, you've got to force them at home, you know, to do it*

(LA63, Pakistani male, aged 37, moved to GB aged 11)

But interestingly, despite a perception of the mutual exclusiveness of different religions – which, strictly, is required for this to be a basis for ethnic ‘othering’ and boundary formation – some respondents did recognise similarities between them, suggesting a need for further exploration of the importance of religion as a basis for group formation and identification:

*I'm sure it's just as strong for the Church of England or Hindus, Muslims, whatever, it's the same thing [as it is for Catholics]...there's a big Hindu community [here] and you see that same strength of character in their community and the same elements are there, family, schools and the church or whatever, their religion*

(LN120, Irish male, aged 46, born in GB)

*I believe in Almighty. Some people call Him as God, some say Allah or some say Bhagwan. But originally He is one. Different people call Him or pray Him in different way. But the religious feelings are same*

(LN50, Bangladeshi male, aged 38, moved to GB aged 28)

Religious identity was also useful as a means of presenting your ‘ethnic’ affiliation to the external audience, which may suggest a way in which religion may support a form of exclusivity or groupness – based, explicitly or implicitly, on ethnicity rather than religion – which might seem otherwise untenable. This was apparent in the discussion of one respondent who reported her religious identity (as a Sikh) to be relatively unimportant to her, but still felt it important that her son wear a “*topknot*”:

*it's an outward sign that, you know, he's a Sikh which I don't feel is totally necessary but at the same time, maybe at that age it's something that might help actually children to understand what they are, perhaps as they get older it might not become such an important thing because they'll know more, more sort of fundamental issues rather than the outward symbols*

(CL08, Indian woman, aged 38, moved to GB aged 4)

So, the top-knot was a means for her son, and others (as this was an ‘outward symbol’), to make sense of who he was at his young age, even though it was not a particularly important part of who she felt *she* was which questions the need for this cultural exhibitionism. This comment would therefore beg question regarding who her son’s Sikh identity is important for, and why, suggesting a role for a form of ‘external’ (or perhaps extended familial) religious regulatory authority. This religious custom may also be fulfilling non-religious function in drawing attention to the “*fundamental issues*” of, perhaps, ethnic community and exclusion.

### **The importance of ‘blood’**

Many respondents also discussed elements of ‘ethnicity’ which might be considered (even) less flexible. Historical ancestry was associated with a sense of belonging to, or coming from, a particular place, a “*home*” (LA40, LN89). Importantly, some respondents still considered themselves to in some senses live somewhere other than Britain – “*we lived in a village and still do in Pakistan*” (BM65) – although it is unclear whether this comment is related to the continued residence of her family in Pakistan (of which she considers herself to be part) or related to real or imagined periods of residence there. People talk about having “*roots*”, a “*past*” and something “*inside*” them which links them to a particular ethnic group. Related to this was the concept of “*blood*”: which related to a combination of birthplace, ancestry, culture and upbringing, what in some circumstances may be described as ‘lineage’.

*although I've lived in this country most of my life and I've got a British passport...I'm Irish because that's what my mum and dad's blood is, that's what my blood is...you haven't got Chinese blood in you because you were born in China*

(CL26, Irish female, aged 29, moved to GB aged 1)

*the blood what is flowing in our body, it can't be changed so easily... Still all my childhood memories back home are flowing and will flow in my blood. That can't be changed.*

(LN50, Bangladeshi male, aged 38, moved to GB aged 28)

This idea of a physical link between yourself and your ethnicity or country of origin which had an inescapable influence on your character was also apparent when people discussed the characteristics which they assumed to be the typical cultural traits of a particular ethnic group. People described being “*biologically*” (NT23) or “*technical[ly]*” (LA20) *from* a particular ethnic group:

*as much as I'm British...genetically I'm still Black, there are things about me that I do naturally as a Black person*

(BM13, Black Caribbean female, aged 42, born in GB)



People's behaviours were believed to be related to their cultural '*make up*' (NT23), and ethnic groups constituted different "*makes*" of people (LN89), in a similar way to cars: suggesting that while people may vary, there is some similarity in their underlying characteristics which means their ethnic affiliation is static and clear-cut and their associated cultural traits, unavoidable. Those with Irish heritage who considered themselves to have 'mixed' or 'English' ethnicity also referred to their 'Irish blood' to enable them to retain links with Ireland, and an 'Irish' aspect to their appreciation of their ethnicity:

*I'm proud to be English but I'm proud that I've got Irish blood as well*

(BM31, Irish female, aged 41, born in GB)

Furthering this idea of a biological link to an ethnic group is the idea that people with parents with different ethnic affiliations can potentially constitute a proportion of the 'ethnicity' of each. So people talked about being, for example, "*half English, half Jamaican*" (LN69). It is possible, although there is no clear evidence here, that these attitudes are in part a cohort effect, stemming from the widespread use of the term 'half-caste' in late 20<sup>th</sup> century Britain, with its clear indication of a sense of an ethnicity which is in some way divisible. Other respondents also described their 'mixed ethnicity' status as constituting "*a mixture of two cultures*" (LN113); again suggesting the integration of two distinctive cultures, but without this idea of biological heritage or proportion. While such respondents may talk about themselves as being 'Black' (described below), suggesting an experiential similarity with people from other ethnic minority groups, there was a concern that other forms of 'ethnic' category were unavailable to them: "*I don't categorise myself like, you know, like Asian or whatever or Afro-Caribbean or whatever because I'm not... so I just put down 'mixed race'*" (LN69).

This 'genetic' or 'biological' ethnicity was also associated with particular forms of behaviour:

*Elsa is Black...she's naturally violent* (NT25, Black Caribbean female, aged 34, born in GB)

There was a strong sense that there is an 'Irishness' which people self-defining as 'Irish' felt part of, and those people with Irish heritage who self-defined as 'British' (etc) did not:

*I'm sat quietly there and thinking..this is not me, I'm British, I said I don't do this sort of thing, this is how you class Irish people*

(LA20, Irish female, aged 33, born in GB)

People described 'Irish people' as having particular "*idiosyncrasies*", being very family-orientated, loyal, self-sufficient, friendly, happy, generous and proud, and also slightly rebellious (as a positive characteristic) and tempestuous.

*they're very different to the English aren't they...they're a different type of people, they like to enjoy themselves more and they're very friendly, very hospitable, do anything for you, especially if you're family. They're more family orientated as well...[if there's a problem] all the family gather round, don't they, whereas I'm not sure if that would happen here [in Britain]*

(BM31, Irish female, aged 41, born in GB)

*I can be very very stropky...very aggressive but I think that's part of my cultural makeup as well...I've just come back from Scotland, up in Edinburgh and they're very like us, you know, the Northern Irish...they'll push you out of the way.*

(NT23, Irish female, aged 40, moved to GB aged 19)

'Irish' people were argued to have a particular "*Irish philosophy...[Their] attitude to life is different... they don't worry about too much*" (LN120) and a creative tendency, which could be seen through a tradition of good food (a tradition which did not exist in England), songs and writing.

*my mother's Irish...the food she cooks, or did cook, sort of even the songs, the culture...she just always said that nothing tastes the same, she has not felt well since she came to England*

(NT18, Irish female, aged 47, born in GB)

*the great Irish writers...even my son wants to be a writer...he even senses that...he comes from a writing tradition*

(NT23, Irish female, aged 40, moved to GB aged 19)

So it was argued that this ethnic awareness is internally driven: her son had not been told but had "*sensed*" the writing tradition in his heritage. 'Black' people were perceived as being naturally loud and confident and (like Irish people) more relaxed and happy, and more friendly and less competitive, than British/English people.

*It's something I grew up with in Jamaica, back home, I mean grandparents never worried... They were always like, you like dinner tomorrow, tomorrow don't come yet so I'm not thinking about that...you might not live to see it so why worry about it...I think it's completely different from here*

(LN89, Black Caribbean male, aged 32, born in GB)

*Black people seem to tend to get out of stress and anger by drinking a lot and partying a lot...Black people when they're mentally sick or physically sick, they just get on with it.*

(BM14, Black Caribbean male, aged 41, moved to GB aged 10)

‘Asian’ and Jewish people were considered hard-working:

*I mean I had a store next-door, when I bought it it was a different owner of that store and he used to shut at 6 o'clock so I was alright, I used to make money after 6 o'clock, and the new owners, Jewish, and obviously they'll work all hours like Asians do and they stopped open till 11*

(LA63, Pakistani male, aged 37, moved to GB aged 11)

People from ethnic minority groups were also perceived as being more emotional than ‘white’ people:

*“so many white English people...it's like nobody cries...you go to Black funerals and...everyone is just bawling round the place and they're wailing and on the news you can see these Arab people and the Asian people and everyone is just falling on the floor in grief”*

(BM13, Black Caribbean female, aged 42, born in GB)

Interestingly, though, on reflection there was a realisation that these perceived differences were not as clear-cut and inflexible as first imagined:

*When you start examining things, there don't seem to be any logic in it [the ‘Irish’ way]*

(LN120, Irish male, aged 46, born in GB)

But even when these ‘ethnically specific’ behaviours were considered to exist, it was felt that it was sometimes unjustifiably misconstrued. It was felt that much of the perceived negative treatment of Black people by the medical services, which was described most frequently, was a consequence of the misrepresentation of the innate ‘loudness’ of Black people as aggression by the, predominantly white, medical providers.

*I don't know about normal medicine but I think if you go mad and you're Black they are afraid of our strength, aren't they, we are strong people, aren't we, and some people are afraid of that, they don't understand what they do not know....some people can read it the wrong way and I think that's how it is with a lot of Black people because we are loud and we do like to be heard so I do think that's what happens, some people sometimes do judge and say, well, you're all the same.*

(NT25, Black Caribbean female, aged 34, born in GB)

This situation was affected by cultural differences between Black and white groups, and the fact that people from ethnic minority groups did not conform to “*the white way*” (BM13) of doing things – a comment which recognised the normalisation of white British majority culture in a way which white British and other respondents using more Anglified labels did not. But it was also a consequence of a lack of effort on the part of, for example, social workers to understand these ‘innate’ cultural differences.

*an ordinary Black person trying to deal with a professional white person, most likely middle class, and there is no understanding...they [Black people] just do things more exaggerated... the social worker doesn't understand that*

(BM13, Black Caribbean female, aged 42, born in GB)

‘Communication’ problems were not only faced by Black people:

*this Asian woman went to the doctor and said, you know, my children are draining my blood from me, something like that, they put her down as schizo, as mad, you know, but this woman was just saying I'm depressed, you know, that I'm just so tired, my children are making me so tired but, you know, ... and he just thought this woman is mad, how can your children be draining your blood, he must have took it a literal way or something*

(BM13, Black Caribbean female, aged 42, born in GB)

The suggestion that the health provider is likely to be ‘middle class’ could support a conclusion that perceived ‘ethnic differences’ may be exacerbated by those of social class. And also that an ethnic minority identity – that of, for example, an “*ordinary*” Black person – is considered to also be a working class identity, although respondents recognised that there were differences between “*typical white English middle class*” children (NT23) and white working-class “*estate kids*” (LA63). Part of the insecurity described by NT23 was related to being a working-class Irish person moving in middle-class English circles. But there was also a concern that some middle-class Black people consider themselves (wrongly) to have more in common with middle-class white people than working-class Black people, and as a consequence fail to work to improve the opportunities for their *own* (ethnic) community. The assumption being in part that ethnicity is an inescapable and therefore more fundamental part of your character than your social class.

*my son, he used to do waitressing and silver servicing while he's at college...if you're a snob, you're a snob, be it a Black snob or a White snob...there's a big banquet on ... there were Blacks there just as much as Whites, and he says he got looked down more at by the Blacks*

*more than the Whites....You've got all these Black footballers, right, and these sports people, they make it to the top, they don't go back and say, well, there are still Black kids round here that are wanting help out* (BM14, Black Caribbean male, aged 41, moved to GB aged 10)

### **The affect of who I am not**

This idea of the innate nature of ethnicity was also expressed during discussions around the groups which 'we' are not and the behaviour of 'other' groups.

*The rate of TB in Leicester is the highest in the country because the Asians gob in the street all the time.* (CL26, Irish female, aged 29, moved to GB aged 1)

*There's just too many Indian people around here that are just...they're taking over...as much as everyone has got their own right to live as they are I think they're very very inflict all their beliefs on you but they're not very giving.*

(LN65, Black Caribbean woman, aged 38, born in GB)

These discussions included a clear 'othering' – associating 'other' people with immoral and inappropriate behaviour, and therefore privileging (the behaviour of) members of your 'own' group. So these discussions contain a suggestion that the behaviour of 'Asian' and 'Indian' people is 'unBritish' and deviant. The behaviour of Asians in Leicester, for example, causing rates of TB unseen anywhere else in the country: assumingly because 'non-Asians' (who predominate elsewhere) do not behave in this way. LN65 goes on to describe her experiences of trying to rent a hall for her daughter's christening:

*the halls that do rent around here you find now the Indians have got and ... if you're going to be drinking alcohol or serving meat and ... they were saying to us, well, yes, you can have it but if you're going to be serving meat you've got to pay for someone to come in and cleanse the place and I'm thinking, well, why have I got to, you know, that's nothing to do with me...like my child-minder was saying to me about the school,...they've got so many holidays this year because of the Indians, you know, it works out they've got another 8 days off, you know, which, you know, for working people it is hard...but they don't take, they don't respect our holidays which I really don't agree...*

In an opinion authenticated by her childminder, she considers ultimate ownership of Britain (and all the spaces within it) to be with the 'British' – those that conform to the 'British' way of life. Her frustration stems from her view that while 'British' people (feel obliged to) make allowances for 'Indian' culture, 'Indian' people disrespect 'British' culture – here symbolised as involving 'working', participating in Christian holidays, eating meat and drinking alcohol. In

light of this, it is also interesting that when asked about her ethnic background, this respondent describes herself as being 'Afro Caribbean', commenting that she is unhappy about identifying herself as a member of an ethnic group at all. That *"it shouldn't make any difference to what you are, you should still be able to perform the same way"*. Her above comments could suggest that she considers there to be behavioural similarities between the 'British' and 'Afro Caribbean' cultures which separate them from those of 'Indian' groups, or that 'Afro Caribbean' people make sufficient effort to integrate with 'British culture' not to pose a problem for 'British people'. It may follow, then, that she believes that only those that can behave 'appropriately' should feel themselves entitled to be free from negative treatment by others.

Among people who considered themselves to be part of an ethnic minority group (particularly), being 'English' (unlike being British) was often perceived of as negative: NT23, for example, changing her name from an 'English' to a more 'Irish' sounding name, saying *"maybe it's just because I don't want to be English"*. This attitude was related to a perceived *"inbred"* (WY32) racism, a *"bullish jenoistic sort of attitude"* (LN127) inherent in 'English' people – which is perhaps a combination of jingoism and xenophobia – and also to their perceived 'immoral' behaviour.

[Are there any other differences you think between the two [Pakistani and English] cultures?] *I think obviously drinking and drugs, pregnancies, I mean you hear of [English] girls getting pregnant at 12, 13* (LA63, Pakistani male, aged 37, moved to GB aged 11)

White British respondents' definitions of what it *means* to be 'British' or 'English' were also related to perceptions of an 'other' and of what they were not, but without any apparent need to blatantly promote the perceived superiority of this identity over that of other groups – its superiority assumingly obvious, and not only from the examples employed. What it meant to be 'British' was described in relation to a perceived supremacy in sport or warfare, or a perceived superior climate or 'order', what could perhaps be considered 'victory through fair competition' and 'civilisation'.

*when you've seen your country competing and whether it's bloody dominoes or darts or whatever it is you'll always take some sort of pride*

(EX18, white British male, aged 31, born in GB)

*England itself is...other countries seem so disorganised and I'm a fairly organised person...being hot is very nice but sort of everything is a bit arid, dry and dusty, I miss the sort of green countryside*

(EX24, white British male, aged 49, born in GB)

*[British] it's just a name really' [Is that quite important?] 'yes, oh, British is, yes, We beat the Germans, didn't we?* (EX42, white British male, aged 48, born in GB)

One of the positive aspects considered related to being of 'mixed' ethnicity was the ability to define your own lifestyle, according to the wider number of cultural influences which existed: *"my son ... has the opportunity to learn about everything [all the different cultures in his life] and then make up his own mind"* (LN113). The attitudes of those around you often influenced your ability to define yourself in the way, and according to the criteria, which you would choose, however. The opening quotes of this chapter referred to the importance of physical characteristics in ethnic definitions. And people's discussions of their attitudes towards ethnicity and their own ethnic affiliation recognised the restrictions faced by people from ethnic minority groups in Britain, and the influence of 'others' on their sense of themselves.

*I see myself as British, you know, English, British, whichever, and I don't see myself as of Irish origin at all but I remember at school...finding it extraordinary that although I was British I had to go and sign this thing because both my parents were Irish ...I felt embarrassed by doing that because I felt like I was the same as everybody else but then I was being treated differently... you know, I told people about this questionnaire... you know, they took me through the survey because they were explaining, you know, they were taking ethnic minority groups and I thought, I said what group am I then? She said, 'well, both your parents are Irish, aren't they?' I said, 'well, I never thought that was [important]'.*

(LA20, Irish female, aged 33, born in GB)

Similarly, although people with 'mixed' ethnicity parentage seemed not to prioritise affiliation to one ethnic group over another, describing themselves as a combination of cultures – or half something, and half something else – their identity as a member of an ethnic minority group was emphasised through working in predominantly 'white' environments (LN113) and in knowledge of the racist experiences of others:

*you just get a chip on your shoulder, you get this certain image no matter what you've been loved by your mum and your dad and one is different colours or not, you have a chip on your shoulder because you see that society is not fully for Blacks*

(NT25, Black Caribbean female, aged 34, born in GB)

This respondent, who had 'mixed' ethnic parentage, goes on to describe her own experiences of racism, describing herself as a *"person with colour"*, and also her concerns about being the victim of institutional racism.

People from non-white groups were therefore seen to be limited in their ability to label themselves in ways which went beyond considerations of skin colour, unlike white groups who were able to “blend in” and “live anywhere” (LA21): particularly if they did not have an accent, or anything else, which might identify them as ‘different’.

*[People] judge you the minute you walk into a room, they have certain expectations of you and how they treat you and expect you to behave*

(SH07, Indian female, aged 45, moved to GB aged 6)

*[Did that ever create any difficulty, being Irish?] ... You get a few paddy jokes and things like that but I don't have an accent, you know, I don't have any of that so that has never been a problem for me at all*

(CL26, Irish female, aged 29, moved to GB aged 1)

So, LA21 refers to an internally-motivated desire to blend in and live anywhere, but fulfilling this desire requires being given the opportunity to do so by the group with whom you wish to blend. There were also perceived expectations among people from minority ethnic groups regarding the meaning of people’s assumed ethnic background, which respondents sought to fulfil:

*a difficulty I came across when I was younger was ... being mixed race...but personally I look Indian, well, a lot of people see me as being Indian...going to college there's an awful lot of Indian people there and like... I don't speak the language and I really, you know, emphasised it to my dad that I want Nico [her son] to learn Hindi and to learn to speak it because I think it's an important part of the way he is seen by people that he has to learn all about those things.*

(LN113, Indian female, aged 27, born in GB)

Interviews suggested that discussions with the external audience, supposedly British ‘others’, about ethnic affiliation centred around a geographically-located ethnicity, established, particularly, by an individual’s place of birth:

*I've had rows with other people...where your born is where you're from*

(CL26, Irish female, aged 29, moved to GB aged 1)

But being born in or having parents from Britain or having a ‘British’ lifestyle is not sufficient for you to be accepted as ‘British’ if you are ‘visibly’ different. Experiences of racial harassment or discrimination were in themselves able to override other considerations of ethnic affiliation, as I shall discuss later:



*I always say [to my children] you're British... they say no, Dad...how can I be, they call me 'Paki' now in school* (BM52, Pakistani male, aged 45, moved to GB aged 11)

## Conclusions

These discussions suggest that 'ethnicity', in more abstract sense, is meaningful and a means to engender a sense of unity with, as well as distance from, other members of society. People described a range of options for defining 'ethnicity' which debate both the number of 'dimensions' which may be considered applicable and the particular impact of any one on your self-perception and ethnic label use. For some, ethnic affiliation allowed for the interaction of a multiplicity of considerations including those of (social and geographical) place, history, biology, upbringing, lifestyle and social community and class. There were criteria which could override others – particularly place of birth, geographical ancestry – and were influenced by the opinions of those around you. Together these criteria have the ability to engender a sense of both individual 'culture' and 'groupness'; of 'us-ness' and othering. Some of these dimensions – such as particular lifestyles – may be, to some extent, internally defined; although the consistency in the choice of these criteria across individuals and groups and discussions of the direction of 'causality' of their resonance could suggest the influence of others on the negotiation of the more important influences on these choices – even if they are those considered (or who consider themselves) within the same 'ethnic' group. The vagueness of some defining criteria suggest that there might be attempts to engender a sense of internal group identity in response to more hostile 'othering' by an external force. Other aspects of ethnic definition are more clearly and virtually exclusively externally controlled. Importantly, these descriptions of respondents' abstract awareness of modes of ethnic classification and affiliation give a sense of potential simplicity and stability. That even while multiple criteria might be incorporated into ethnic definitions, these would not appear to produce contradiction or conflict, or require extensive negotiation. I shall now explore how far these considerations of what 'ethnicity' could be might be useful, or even meaningful, in people's discussions of their 'own' ethnic labels, beginning with the perceived salience of 'ethnicity', in any form, in their lives.

## **Chapter 5      Personal accounts of the salience and meaning of ‘ethnicity’ as a form of identity**

In the previous chapter I explored people’s more general opinions regarding what were important considerations for a definition or appreciation of ‘ethnicity’. People described a need to explore a number of different potential influences, although certain criteria might hold more influence over a final decision regarding ethnic affiliation than others. On the whole, there was a sense that ethnicity could be defined in a fairly uncomplicated manner, even despite these multiple influences. In this chapter I will discuss how people describe their own appreciation of their ethnicity, including whether, when and in what ways ‘ethnicity’ is considered meaningful and important to them personally and the role of different influences in their appreciation of their own ethnic status: particularly, whether and to what extent different aspects of ‘ethnicity’ were considered influential, or even applicable, to their own recognition of their ethnicity and ethnic group membership. People’s discussions focussed on the importance of geography, ancestry, culture and religion and the way in which these different aspects of ethnicity interacted with each other; in a more inclusive sense – as a member of a particular ethnic community – and also those which might form relationships of exclusion, such as those involving racist victimisation. Importantly, this aspect of the analysis is able to present more explicit information addressing the negotiation and dynamic nature of ethnic status which has been thus far missing from these analyses, and whether there are particular circumstances under which such negotiations become more problematic. The final section of this chapter will present a series of individual’s biographies to explore individual’s personal accounts of the ways in which the different manifestations of ‘ethnicity’ interrelate in their own lives.

### **Discussions of whether ‘ethnicity’ is meaningful**

Many of the interviews with white British people supported a perception that ‘ethnicity’ is a characteristic only available to people from ethnic minority groups. Indeed, only four of the nineteen white British people included in the full qualitative sample discussed their ethnicity in any way. So, while people with Irish heritage held more of a sense of the relevance of ‘ethnicity’ in their own lives, for some white British respondents only non-white people could be members of an ‘ethnic group’: perhaps influenced by the treatment of the term ‘ethnic’ in the media and elsewhere in public life, where the term ‘ethnic’ is often used, incorrectly, to mean ‘ethnic minority’:

*It’s funny, I’ve just seen in the paper today they’re saying that the police force are taking on an extra 215 people from the ethnic regions so they’ve found out that 214 of them were Irish!...I wouldn’t quite call that as of an ethnic origin...I mean most people if you think of an ethnic origin it will either be Asian or Caribbean or something, that I suppose in my way*

*of thinking it would be. I suppose not 'British' and 'of a foreign country' would really be, yes, I think so*  
(EX24, white British male, aged 49, born in GB)

Although, as I have described, respondents were able to consider the meaning of being 'white British' in a more abstract sense – the definitions chosen suggesting a sense of superior ability and civilisation, this did not appear to be considered a form of 'ethnicity'. So despite not having an 'ethnicity', the above respondent commented:

*I suppose I'm fairly proud to be British ... I do sort of miss Britain...I quite enjoy being British... I'm quite happy to be British and to live in England*  
(EX24, white British male, aged 49, born in GB)

Being 'British', then, does not appear to be related to a particular culture or group affiliation. There was a suggestion that white British people conflate their national and ethnic identities, which is also supported by a perceived lack of necessity for associating a 'British' identity with a colour, at least for white people. Other respondents (from different ethnic groups) felt that their ethnicity had meaning in their lives, but that it did not hold any particular salience in it. Respondents talked about having "loyalty" to (LA63) or "respect for" (LN51) a country. While some people talked about being "proud" of their ethnic affiliation.

Respondents from non-British ethnic groups, particularly those in non-manual occupations, voiced frustration at being asked to classify themselves (in the interview and more generally) according to criteria which were of no consequence to them. Some such respondents felt that their ethnicity was of no relevance to them or their lives. Others, as the following quotation shows, felt that the criteria usually imposed in more formal classifications of 'ethnicity' were meaningless; problematising assumptions about the persistent relevance of classifications based on geographical, ancestral, historical and phenotypical methods of ethnic ascription as a proxy for homogeneity, and also highlighting the power of others in the labelling process.

*I don't see myself [as Afro-Caribbean] because...when I go to the Caribbean they see me as English first and foremost...I don't affiliate myself with that [being from St Kitts] because I'm not from there. My parents are from there and if you want to say that I'm Afro-Caribbean descent then fair enough, even then I don't even associate myself with that... if you want to start talking along them traits...you can be silly about it...the slave trade...Africans were shipped all round the world...so you can say, yes, the Black man did derive from Africa or whatever but...I was born here, raised here, this is my culture, yes the only thing that you can really identify me...is the colour of my skin, you know, and even*

*then...the colour of my skin is not black, it's brown...so it gets ridiculous about personal identity...what you should be doing is look at me*

(LA17, Black Caribbean male, aged 26, born in GB)

Some respondents felt that other aspects of their lives were important, even more important, for their self definition than their ethnicity: recognising the multiple influences on their sense of self, and the hybrid nature of their self awareness:

*I'm a young Black man*

(LA17, Black Caribbean male, aged 26, born in GB)

*I see myself as a woman first before I say I'm a Black*

(LN65, Black Caribbean woman, aged 38, born in GB)

For others, this resistance was related to a sense that simply identifying with a particular ethnic group promoted the development of boundaries of exclusion and risk of further discrimination and hostility, rather than their dismantling:

*when you're pro-Black it doesn't solve the issue ...because all you're doing is creating that barrier where, yes, you have got your identification, let's not mince words here...what else you're doing is building segregation by doing that and not actually addressing the issue of equally balanced, you know, and that's where I'm coming from. I'm not here to say you're white people, you did that to us in the past, you know, what about my colour skin, you know, that stupid attitude, it's dumb, it's stupid. It's about here and now, it's about tackling the fundamental issues that young people are suffering for today, that's what the job is about. It's not about colour, to me it's not about the colour of skin even though the colour of skin plays a part in it.*

(LA17, Black Caribbean male, aged 26, born in GB)

So although reactions to skin colour may have been fundamental in producing the disadvantage experienced by ethnic minority groups, the solution lay in looking to the future, as a unified society, rather than becoming preoccupied with laying blame for the past, grouping ourselves into what might be considered factions, and demanding that other groups take responsibility for their historical actions, which has so far, in Britain at least, been met with limited success. But such attitudes could be considered to ignore the discrimination still experienced by members of ethnic minority groups, described at length by respondents and discussed later, which seems to occur independently of any particular ethnic classification on the part of the victim.

For some respondents, there was a strong sense of a role for ‘ethnicity’ in their lives:

*... I actually changed my name quite recently ... I was actually christened Janet ... I always hated that name because it just didn't, it didn't seem to fit me at all ... it was just important to me, you know, to have that, you know, that sort of badge, you know, and I really wanted to have an Irish name so I changed my name.*

(NT23, Irish female, aged 40, moved to GB aged 19)

The use of the term ‘badge’ here, for example, suggesting a strong affiliation with her Irish identity: a ‘badge-wearing’ member of a group considered more broadly, in English parlance, to be someone whose affiliations to a particular group or organisation are sufficiently strong for them to choose to be identified by others in terms of their associations with that group. Others, however, barely mentioned ethnicity, suggesting an overriding importance of other aspects of their identity, or the normalisation of ethnicity such that its power is unappreciated. Others still, like LA17 above, were unhappy at the scant attention we, as researchers, pay to the potential complexities of ethnic affiliation, our methods achieving nothing more than unhelpfully labelling and potentially stigmatising and victimising people.

### **Influences on the perceived applicability of particular labels**

Respondents employed a range of labels in initial responses to the question exploring personal ethnic background. Respondents classified as ‘Irish’ or ‘Pakistani’ according to the measures used in the HSE defined themselves using those terms, or described themselves as ‘English’ or ‘British’. And respondents classified as ‘Bangladeshi’ perceived themselves to be either ‘Bangladeshi’ or a combination of ‘Bangladeshi’ and ‘British’. Three of the six ‘Bangladeshi’ respondents also talked about being part of the Bengali community or people – although they also described ‘Bangladeshi people’ as ‘our community’ (LN46). Interestingly, respondents classified as ‘Black Caribbean’ or ‘Indian’ used a wider variety of labels. Those classified as ‘Black Caribbean’ labelled themselves as ‘Caribbean’, ‘Afro-Caribbean’, ‘Black’, ‘Black British’ or of ‘mixed’ ethnicity.<sup>14</sup> And those classified as ‘Indian’ described themselves as ‘Indian’, ‘Asian’, ‘British’/‘English’, as ‘English’ or ‘European’ ‘Indian’ and as having ‘mixed’ ethnicity.<sup>14</sup> It appears that (among the South Asian groups) respondents interviewed in languages other than English employed less radical labels – describing themselves as ‘Bangladeshi’, ‘Indian’ or ‘Pakistani’ – compared with people interviewed in English, who used a broader range of labels suggesting a wider range, or a more conflicting set, of influences on their self-definition. Across ethnic groups, non-manual respondents and those with higher education (beyond ‘Advanced’ level) also appeared to employ a wider range of and more hybrid and less radical labels to define themselves.

The influence of different criteria was clear in the discussions of label choice. Respondents classified using the HSE measure as 'Black Caribbean' who described themselves as 'Black' and 'Black (Afro-) British', for example, tended to have been born in Britain, and to have a UK-based community and focus. Respondents defining themselves as 'Bangladeshi' tended to have been born in Bangladesh, to have migrated during their late teens or twenties and to have been interviewed in Bengali. The 'transfer' of self-defined ethnic label from 'Pakistani' to 'British' or a combination of the two also seemed to be related to more formal criteria, particularly place of birth and citizenship. People with Irish ancestry who described themselves as 'English' or 'British' relied on their place of birth as the defining characteristic, and appeared to perceive themselves as having fewer links with Ireland, or to be influenced by a number of different cultures of which 'Irish' culture was one.

As suggested in the previous chapter, culture and upbringing seemed to have an important impact on the terms people used to describe themselves. Black Caribbean respondents describing themselves as 'Black' and 'Black (Afro) British' did not perceive themselves as having (what could be described as) a particularly authentic 'Caribbean' upbringing and, as a consequence, lifestyle. Respondents with Indian heritage who described themselves as 'Asian', 'British' and 'English' or 'European' 'Indian' also appeared to have a more 'Westernised' lifestyle, compared with those who described themselves as 'Indian'. For some not maintaining particular traditions may affect your choice of ethnic label. So one respondent with Indian heritage described himself as 'Asian', although his lifestyle could be considered more 'British' than 'Indian', as suggested by the comments of his *"wife's friends, they say 'you're British'"* (LN112). Others, though, believed that their maintenance of traditional customs could shift, while the significance of their (in this case, religious) identifier remained:

*I am a Muslim, even though I don't really practise or dress in a particular way.*

(LA81, Pakistani woman, aged 26, born in GB)

LN117 described himself as 'Indian' but also felt that any children he had *"would find it difficult to put down India"* because he had *"lost touch"* with the aspects of his lifestyle which had identified him as 'Indian', and so could not pass them on. But this shift in practice could render these labels generally meaningless. So ethnicity, rather than being a form of *"identity... [becomes] more of a kind of state what your origins are"* (LN117), a label without any substance. A label which is entirely externally motivated, and lacking internal relevance.

Maintaining 'Bangladeshi culture' (for themselves and future generations) was considered very important for those defining themselves as 'Bangladeshi'. And although Bangladeshi respondents recognised a need to adapt to their environment; how far this affected their self-

definition varied. Indeed, some Bangladeshi respondents felt that any adaptation was only superficial: done as a requirement to function effectively in new surroundings and not contradicting their underlying, and ‘true’ ethnic affiliation:

*[How do you explain your ethnicity?] It's a difficult question. I think you need to change as per the place. I believe this. But inside home I am pure Bangladeshi only*

(LN05, Bangladeshi female, aged 44, moved to GB aged 2)

*we are born and brought up in Bangladesh so it will not change. But when I am living in this country, I need to like and love everything step by step. It is necessary and essential and I am doing also same.*

(LN50, Bangladeshi male, aged 38, moved to GB aged 28)

Respondents happy to define themselves as either ‘Bangladeshi’ or ‘British’, or both, perceived themselves as having a more integrated lifestyle: retaining (mental and physical) links with Bangladesh, but also having a more ‘Westernised’ lifestyle – demanding more egalitarian gender roles, for example. The mix of labels in self-defining as ‘British or Bangladeshi’ also reflects the combined influence of British and Bangladeshi cultures on these respondents, compared with those describing themselves as simply ‘Bangladeshi’.

### **The role of the ethnic community in ethnic identification and labelling**

The perceived ethnic community encouraged an impression of clear cut, distinctive and meaningful ethnic groups and labels. Several respondents from ethnic minority groups who made reference to ethnicity before it was introduced by the interviewer, did so to draw attention to the perceived positive consequences of having a high proportion of people from their ‘own’ ethnic group living in the local area; although this was sometimes offset by the problems associated with socioeconomic deprivation which affected such areas and lead to desires to move away.

A number of respondents described participating in groups which were focused on their ethnic community. Such desires, perhaps not surprisingly, were associated with a clear sense of ethnic affiliation and was expressed most frequently by respondents with less ‘Anglified’ choices of ethnic label choices. People had been members of ‘Irish folk bands’ (BM28) or had parties at ‘Irish’ clubs (BM31). Others did voluntary work with counselling groups, were research and development workers and training coordinators specifically focussing on ‘their’ ethnic community; involvement which was in only a small way motivated by language ability. Involvement in this study, even, was considered positive if it were able to “benefit our community” (LN50). Indeed among some respondents there was a regret that ‘their community’

was limited in its ability to help itself, as a consequence of a lack of education or experience, as a result having to rely on more mainstream British services:

*I don't think there's enough people educated in our culture, within the family where you can, you know, take to one side and talk to you...they're going to school most of them but not any further then, not college or university. You know, if you say "depression" they'll probably laugh at you and say "what's depression?", you know...we've got few people who can understand, you know, go into depth and talk about it... I had a place [at] University ...But I got married...at that point it was just me within the family who got that far and it was a worry and so you didn't know who to ask for advice, who to turn to.*

(LA63, Pakistani male, aged 37, moved to GB aged 11)

But in keeping with the dynamic nature of ethnic definitions more generally, the people included in an ethnic 'community' could shift. For example, as might be suggested from their label use, 'Pakistani', 'Bangladeshi' and 'Indian' people also included themselves in an 'Asian' community - particularly in opposition to the negatively perceived 'English' way of life, and in relation to their experiences of racism. As mentioned above, some 'Bangladeshi' people also talked about being members of both the Bengali and the Bangladeshi community:

*We have a community centre in a local community centre for our Bengali community, so we do lots of volunteers for our community so I go to lots of meetings... we have meetings for anything happens and any things needed we do for our community, for Bangladeshi people*

(LN46, Bangladeshi female, aged 35, moved to GB aged 16)

The 'community' could also be considered to include only people from particular caste groups, what was described as a "caste community" (CL30). People from South Asian groups also described their ethnic community as including those living in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan: respondents talking, for example, about "our people" "back home" (WY03), or their experiences of being in Britain related to, "not living in your own country" (BM65).

So the boundaries of this ethnic community were closely tied to people's considerations of appropriate ethnic labels. Respondents describing themselves as 'Bangladeshi' described themselves as being integrated with Bangladeshi and Bengali culture and religious groups – here and in Bangladesh – while those describing themselves as 'Bangladeshi or British' were also involved in the religious activities of other communities – suggesting a UK-based if still (British) Bangladeshi-focussed community. Similarly, people who described themselves as 'Pakistani' and 'Indian' also retained positive memories of, and perceived themselves to have strong links with, their 'homeland': sometimes juxtaposing these positive images with negative



attitudes towards life in Britain and 'British' culture. Respondents who described themselves as 'Asian', 'British' and 'English' or 'European' 'Indian' appeared to have a weaker association with India and stronger links with the 'Asian' (rather than the 'Indian') community in Britain, compared with those who described themselves as 'Indian'.

For some, there was a sense that maintaining same-ethnic networks was "*natural*", and related to the fundamental differences between people from different ethnic groups which reduced the value of cross-ethnic networks, as described earlier:

*Most of my friends are Irish, we keep to our kind*

(CL26, Irish female, aged 29, moved to GB aged 1)

*I was very alone [in the US] because there's not many Pakistanis there.*

(WY20, Pakistani female, aged 27, born in GB)

Interestingly, Irish people seemed to draw a distinction between the "*huge gap*" between the cultures of English people and those from non-white ethnic groups, compared with the more subtle differences between Irish and English cultures, suggesting both the inherent incompatibility of white and non-white people and also that their own ethnic distinctiveness was based on a simple preference rather than need and perhaps any insinuation of inferiority:

*It's not, I wouldn't say, you know, you have the Asians or the Afro-Caribbeans, I mean that's a huge gap racially [compared with English/British people], you know. Irish is just normal.*

(CL26, Irish female, aged 29, moved to GB aged 1)

For some, the desire for own-ethnic communities was related to the perceived attitudinal distinctiveness of different ethnic groups,

*you go into these nursing homes, they're full of English people...they're not even thanking the people who put them on this planet!...I've got my grandmother...we couldn't shove her in a nursing home, you know, what would the Asian community think?, you know, we have no respect!*

(WY32, Pakistani male, aged 35, born in GB)

and also a perception that members of your 'own' community were people you could "*relate*" to, perhaps in response to the negative stereotypes of other groups, described above.

*if you need somebody they are there, even night-time I need, just call and they are there. Even if they want to call me I will be there straight away. And that's the good thing about this because we are from the same community and that's why it's better...we know each other more*

(WY03, Indian female, aged 45, moved to GB aged 24)

Some respondents were concerned that exposure to 'English'/'British' lifestyles was affecting the behaviour of members of their own ethnic group.

*these children growing up at the moment, they're losing that, you know, there's no respect for elders or, you know, your teacher or whatever....I mean it's very hard for them, living here, having been born here, brought up in England, you know, they have got two cultures to contend with.*

(LA63, Pakistani male, aged 37, moved to GB aged 11)

As a consequence there was concern about the impact that living in Britain would have on people from ethnic minority groups and how the traditions and customs of different ethnic groups would adapt as a consequence.

*[within our culture] it's getting worse, it's getting towards the English culture...these days, especially in this country, you know, people are not as religious as they're supposed to be, you see a lot of Muslims drinking these days, you know, into drugs and that sort of things, you know, it's getting weaker, people's faith really.*

(LA63, Pakistani male, aged 37, moved to GB aged 11)

So these perceived ethnic differences in attitudes and behaviours encouraged a desire for ethnic exclusivity: some respondents even wished to educate their children in their 'homeland'.

There was also a sense that there were issues which were specific to particular ethnic communities, or which affected different communities differently, which therefore required a community-specific response. This was encouraged by a sense that the mechanisms put in place by wider society to prohibit certain activities were inadequate to deal with the problems their community faced. The perceived behavioural problems inherent in white British communities meant that they did not perceive of them as severe as, in this case, 'Bengalis' did, and their disciplinary measures were therefore inadequate, further encouraging a sense of cultural differences between the groups.

*Bengalis have got many problems. These problems can't be solved by me or you, for example, the generation gap, drug addiction, heroin addiction...There should be some law to stop these problems...school truancy is also common in our community. Parent's don't keep proper*

*watch on their children...Back home, in Bangladesh, even up to GCSE level students can be beaten by their teacher or by their parents if they are wrong. But in this country you can't do it*  
(LN50, Bangladeshi male, aged 38, moved to GB aged 28)

Also important to this sense of community was having an exclusive venue that people could go to meet with members of their ethnic community: free to be themselves, away from any sense of being a 'minority' or stigmatised group.

Operating in opposition to this perceived need for ethnic exclusivity, people often reported positive feelings towards the opportunities for learning offered by living in close proximity to people from other cultural groups.

*I follow my own culture, Muslim, but because we live here, we, you know, still we take part in other activities, other religious activities because after all, you're learning, it doesn't matter what kind of religious, what kind of culture you're learning, you're experiencing. Life is, you know, you need to experience..if you go to the church it doesn't harm your religion, you don't, you know, change into any other religion, you just go and see and get together*  
(LN46, Bangladeshi female, aged 35, moved to GB aged 16)

Respondents expressed regret that their inadequate English language abilities had prevented them from developing closer ties with their "white neighbours" (LN11). People identified opportunities to develop new networks – communities, even - which were not structured along ethnic lines, particularly through their, or their child's, education and in the workplace:

*we are all parents together... people from different countries around the world...parents we meet together, you know, so we do different activities together...and we respect each other*  
(LN46, Bangladeshi female, aged 35, moved to GB aged 16)

*where I'm working now there's something like 4 or 5 different cultures there...there's a total mix and everybody enjoys each other's company, quite happy*  
(LN89, Black Caribbean male, aged 32, born in GB)

Interestingly though, as these quotations would suggest, this did not necessarily produce conflict in the appreciation of appropriate ethnic label use, or concern regarding a sense of devaluation. People of mixed ethnicity felt that they were particularly well placed to forge links across ethnic boundaries: "nowadays in this country there's so much mixed marriages and so many different cultures living here that it [being of mixed ethnicity] will probably open more doors for him

*[her son] in the end.*” (LN113). There was a sense, however, that sometimes opportunities for integration were missed.

*I felt sort of like isolated in terms of being ...the odd Black man in the class...of about 35...in total ... there was about 5 students, 2 Asians and 3 Black students...they all seemed to be hanging together so the class was always split into identities...here we are, in this class, very diverse, we're just not...mingling* (LA17, Black Caribbean male, aged 26, born in GB)

But there was also a sense that people from ethnic minority groups were expected to adapt to life in Britain, to ‘fit in’, which might discourage people from ethnic minority groups from establishing cross-ethnic networks:

*what was fascinating me, how they, the Asian community feel they have come into Luton and into England and that and sort of adapted themselves and how they see fitting into the community* (EX18, white British male, aged 31, born in GB)

As these comments might suggest, inter-ethnic networks could therefore promote your awareness of (perceived) ‘ethnic’ difference, rather than dissipating it and the devaluation of your ‘ethnicity’ by others.

*when I went to school there were lots of other children who also had Irish parents so...we were all doing the same things... you don't realise the influence it's having on you ...it's only later on I suppose when you start to branch out in life,... you're working, you're with all sorts of different people and you see all sorts of different backgrounds, if you like, people from different walks of life, that you realise, you know, you were brought up slightly differently* (LN120, Irish male, aged 46, born in GB)

Ethnic mixing could, then, increase the sense of your own ethnic-specificity. One respondent reported having mainly ‘English’ friends as a consequence of what he saw as the prejudiced, particularly anti-Semitic, attitudes of the Muslim community he had grown up with. He self-defined as ‘Indian’, however, rather than labelling himself in a more radical manner, as ‘British’ or ‘Asian’ for example. Perhaps related to this was a concern that people from ethnic minority groups were being treated as a cultural curiosity by members of the ethnic majority: continuing this idea of ‘ethnicity’ as something ‘exotic’ and only held by people who were ‘different’ (and inferior) from those who were white and British. The positive attitudes towards ethnic integration were sometimes seen more as a means for the ‘non-ethnic’ to “*experience*” ‘ethnicity’ – rather like a ride at a theme park – without recognising, or addressing, the social and structural disadvantage experienced by people from ethnic minority groups.

*English people... ethnicity is something they dip into from their liberal sort of standpoint, for them it makes them feel good to think they have all these wonderful cultures in their midst and they can nip down to Brixton and get the 'Caribbean experience' and Southall have the 'Indian experience'...Most people who come here, their backgrounds, they came here as...migrants from very poor background. In my experience, through books of the immigrant communities, is that eventually they assimilate just to improve their chances of work*

(LN117, Indian male, aged 36, born in GB)

Interestingly, although people from ethnic minority groups mentioned having relationships which crossed a variety of ethnic boundaries, discussions of inter-ethnic interactions tended to focus on the impact of encounters and friendships with white British people. Sadly even positive ethnic minority/majority friendships could sometimes emphasise the discriminatory treatment experienced in the interactions of people from ethnic minority groups with other white British people:

*there was always one decent one [white person], you know, that didn't care what colour you was*

(BM14, Black Caribbean male, aged 41, moved to GB aged 10)

*I think I was quite unlucky in some ways that I had this experience in XX with Aunty Edith, so my experience of white people was very positive...as I was growing up I noticed it and it was OK, you know, Aunty Edith was fine, Junior was fine next-door but most people weren't at that time*

(LN117, Indian male, aged 36, born in GB)

It is perhaps the impact of not being able to consider white people as uniformly xenophobic which leads LN117 to perceive his “positive” cross-ethnic relationship with “Aunty Edith” as “unlucky”, perhaps because it emphasises the need for white people to be motivated to develop racist attitudes, rather than it being a simple consequence of a common human fear of the unknown.

For South Asian people this sense of an ethnic community was more formal than that of other groups, and perceptions of being ‘Asian’ often focussed on participation in - and concerns about bringing ‘shame’ and ‘humiliation’ on, or to families within – the ‘Asian’ (or ‘Bangladeshi’, ‘Indian’ or ‘Pakistani’) community.

*the community, the Indian community...it's like they're highlighting some negative aspect in your life, you know, you're failing ... unfortunately that's how our people are like, if they can find something like that, they will keep on so they can, you know, keep you in your place in a*

*sort of a way...they're far more superior because, you know, their lives are sorted and they're being cared for and their families are all functioning beautifully and...you really should be ashamed of yourself...it's quite cleverly done, you know, it does make you feel inadequate that, you know, you are not fulfilling your role and, you know, you're being very selfish in a way...you're beholden to them... it's almost like you're sort of in the shadows of these people...they've got good marketing strategies, you know, they've got these machines behind them...it's not always what people say, it's more looks...very subtle, very subtle...I suppose with age I've been able to rationalise and think, well, no, they are just fuddy-duddy old women and, you know, OK, they've got their opinions, they're entitled to them but...that necessarily isn't the truth.* (SH07, Indian female, aged 45, moved to GB aged 6)

There was a fear that behaviour not conforming to that expected by this community, particularly by daughters, would lead to a loss of familial honour in and possible ostracising from the community. Some people described the serious consequences of flouting such expectations; although, interestingly, these repercussions tended to involve a loss of contact between family members, particularly parents and children, in an effort to avoid the more severe repercussions expected rather than actions which would provide direct evidence of the power of this 'community' (other than, of course, in its ability to evoke such concern). So, people went to considerable lengths to avoid such repercussions: some choosing to remain in extremely difficult situations or breaking contact with family members, rather than risking the wrath of the community. This 'Asian community' therefore exerted considerable influence and control on respondents and their families, even where there was no obvious actual social circle in which the respondent participated which could be considered evidence of this 'community'. As the above quote would suggest, this control seemed to operate through rumours spread through female-dominated informal networks, rather than any form of formal council. Hence, bad behaviour "*gets in the community*" – rumours spreading like a disease – which could be considered particularly damaging in a small interdependent community:

*in our culture if somebody sees your daughter smoking then it's very humiliating...it gets in the community...she gets a bad name...and if they have a bad name then you won't get many people marrying them... it comes back to the parents...I've seen loads of it, yes. Parents I mean, I've seen some parents leave this country and go back home... for this reason*

(LA63, Pakistani male, aged 37, moved to GB aged 11)

Because the whole family would be affected by such bad publicity, a family-wide effort was actioned to avoid such a situation occurring:

*That's a very Asian thing...the whole family that is the reason why everybody goes and tries to sort it out because it is considered a matter of shame when something like that [divorce] happens within the family* (CL08, Indian woman, aged 38, moved to GB aged 4)

It should be noted, however, that it was not only members of 'Asian' families who might have sufficient concerns about reactions to 'inappropriate' behaviour to encourage an extreme response. LA17's brother, for example, had not been in contact with his family for ten years: *"he thinks that we know that he's homosexual and he thinks probably because we're from a Christian strong background that we wouldn't tolerate it."* What varied was the role that this perceived good behaviour and standing in the 'Asian' community played in the identification of what being 'Asian' meant for these families and the way in which it was employed to establish perceptions of disjunctures between different 'ethnic' communities.

But there was frustration at these strict behavioural demands. The fear of the 'Asian' community varied with age, some younger people perhaps less concerned about, or more frustrated by, this proscription than their parents. The *"generation gap"*, of which this is evidence, was also described as one of the many problems faced by the Bengali community in the UK: both younger and older respondents expressing frustration at the behaviour and attitudes of the other. Such attitudes may suggest that this 'Asian community' may be less influential in the establishment of ethnic affiliation in the future.

#### Religion as a source of community development

When asked about their ethnic background, some respondents mentioned a religious affiliation. Most frequently, the term given was 'Muslim', although people also mentioned being 'Hindu' and 'Catholic'. This would suggest that for some people there is a close relationship between those characteristics perceived as significant for your ethnic self-awareness, and those perceived as significant for your religious identity. Religion played a big part in the lives of some respondents classified as 'Irish', 'Black Caribbean' and 'white British' and there was recognition that religion could play a role in the definition of ethnicity: religious affiliation did not, however, seem to have an influence on their understanding, or their discussion, of their ethnic affiliation. Bangladeshi Muslim respondents, on the other hand, talked about having respect for, and maintaining, Bangladesh's *"culture and religion"*. As mentioned in the quotation from the Indian Muslim respondent above, describing yourself as 'Muslim' was not associated with a rigid maintenance of a less radical ethnic label use, however: people able to consider themselves 'Pakistani', 'Bangladeshi', 'Asian' or 'British' (and therefore having more or less Anglified lifestyles) while remaining *"proud"* of their religion. It is possible that the overriding importance of a 'Muslim' identity, particularly as a

member of a 'Muslim' community, enables the use of more radical labels for ethnic identification without crisis.

Religious affiliation provided a further opportunity for the development of a sense of 'ethnic' community and the meaningful nature of particular 'ethnic' labels. Discussions of religion and the role of the (particularly Muslim) religious community suggest that religion could strengthen the internal sense of attachment to an ethnic group, and its perceived associated customs, through the perceived need for involvement in the ethnic or religious community. Because many religious denominations could be considered as having a form of ethnically-specific focus, simply participating in a religious community could strengthen attachment to an ethnically-specific community. Some religious debate also appeared to explicitly attempt to engender a sense of group identity in response to a stereotyped 'other':

*In mosque they'd talk about white people and the terrible things they do, shag each other and get drunk and that's all they ever do* (LN117, Indian male, aged 36, born in GB)

LN117 also described the more broadly anti-Semitic attitudes of the Muslim community, which had finally lead to his decision to leave the Mosque, described below. It also appeared that cross-ethnic and other forms of integration and interaction, which for some came with age, may reduce the effectiveness of these messages:

*the older I got the more... I didn't really feel it was Islam at all, it was just basically Indians being very, being insecure, not really having the kind of political know-how to realise what it was that was making them feel insecure, so they kind of almost created this Islamic persona and then decided everybody hated Islam rather than saying, well...people didn't like me because I was Indian, well, I was 'Paki'* (LN117, Indian male, aged 36, born in GB)

Some people had become disillusioned by what they saw as the inappropriate behaviour of people who considered themselves pious.

*I was really close to Islam and the Koran, I wasn't at all close to the kind of mixed up Indian values that went with it, you know, in fact the Koran is fundamentally not anti-Semitic, Indian Muslims generally are, I was quite happy to make a distinction between Israel and Jewish people...and most in the Mosque couldn't know the difference, and I found that very difficult to reconcile and eventually I couldn't really and I felt they were not really being very good Muslims themselves...the older I got the more I learned about the whole thing, I didn't really feel it was Islam at all* (LN117, Indian male, aged 36, born in GB)



*There's a lot of things I don't agree with in the Catholic religion, they have certain views on certain things, and I don't believe that a lot of people that go to Catholic churches, if they really were a true Catholic then they wouldn't do certain things*

(EX19, white British male, aged 25, born in GB)

Others felt that there was a mismatch between basic religious teachings and customs or attitudes promoted as Islamic or Christian etc.

*As far as I am concerned you have got those people out there who are praying five times a day and are going to the mosque, but really all they are doing is coming out and...back stabbing people and causing harm... they say that the things they do are what it says in the religion, but that's not really true*

(LA81, Pakistani woman, aged 26, born in GB)

Perhaps motivated by similar considerations as the increasingly secular lives of the British population more widely, both these 'Muslim' respondents had in some senses turned their back on the religious education they had received as children – LN117 rejecting the religion entirely, while LA81 continued to consider herself 'Muslim', but declined to practice. As a consequence, the opportunities for this religiosity to present an undisputed and enforceable ethnic affiliation were affected/ Despite the loss of religious motivation and activity for LN117 and LA81, however, both remained aware of the strength of their religious background for their self-awareness, and it performed an important role in their ethnic identification.

### **Motivations for multiple label use and the influence of external forces**

These seemingly straightforward label considerations – where reduced ethnic 'purity' or traditionalism produced gradually more radical label use seemingly without conflict along a type of acculturative 'monochromatic' continuum – disguised a more complicated process which came to light on further discussion. Often, for example, a number of labels could be felt equally relevant to an individual's ethnic identity. In some instances, one was a more or less specific version of another, the various definitions perhaps operating as concentric rings:

*I consider myself Asian and Indian..Asia is the part of the world you come from...I can be specific, I'm Sikh, I'm Punjabi, and that's relevant to my life, you know, it's an important aspect of it, but...it depends on...what your perspective is generally, I just feel it's, you know, from a wider aspect. I don't really mind which way, it doesn't bother me...it's just like you've got a dot and the circles around it get wider and wider...you fit into all of it really...to varying degrees*

(CL08, Indian female, aged 38, moved to GB aged 4)

Alternatively, different ethnic labels allowed for potential conflicts in the separate components of ethnicity – related to place of birth and skin colour, for example – which operate more as a form of Venn diagram, each overlapping but not totally encompassing another:

*...there's probably three different categories, I could say I was British... I could say I was European, you know. I mean you could go on the colour of your skin as well, so I'm white*  
(EX19, white British male, aged 25, born in GB)

As this would suggest, the choice of which particular label to use (at any particular time) was related to the circumstances or situation under discussion. One respondent used the descriptor 'Gujarati' on work forms "*because I speak the language*", but described herself as "*Indian*" (CL30). Another example was discussions which employed broader communities and therefore more inclusive labels; so 'Indian', 'Bangladeshi' or 'Pakistani' people, for example, described the experiences of 'Asian' people in Britain. Importantly, this could suggest that Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi people perceive similarities in their experience – "*that's a very Asian thing [to do]*" (CL08) – which may be partly a consequence of lifestyle changes occurring with increasing residence in Britain:

*I mean my earlier niece and nephews born in the sort of eighties did grow up speaking Gujarati or can speak it to an extent, but the really young ones now, some of the babies they don't speak anything but English... because of all the nieces and nephews around them speak English and go to kind of fairly mixed schools now, lots of Pakistanis, Bengalis and the common language is English. The same thing happened at the Mosque as well, initially when the Mosque was set up in Blackburn it was very much Gujaratis only from certain villages around where the majority were Gujarati...now the main Mosque I think has got Pakistani boys there Bengali boys, girls so because of that English has become kind of a common language so already that language link has been broken, without anyone actually even thinking about it*  
(LN117, Indian male, aged 36, born in GB)

There was also a suggestion that this commonality may be related to the need to "*stick together*" in the face of oppression. LN117, for example, talked about "*Indian kids or Pakistani kids... every half term, invariably a sort of mini-riot between Asians and English kids... the sort of coping came with sort of friends, you'd stick to your own kind, very look after each other as much as possible*", which engendered a sense of group solidarity. There is also a sense, however, that 'being Asian' may mean different things to Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi people, as suggested by the discussion of the need to recognise the "*different communities*" included under the umbrella term 'Asian' (WY03). Motivation to use this label may be partly related, then, to the use of terminology in wider society, particularly the media: 'Asian' perhaps

a label considered, by the 'Asian' community, to be meaningful to people from other ethnic groups who are unable to recognise the differences between being an 'Asian' person with Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi heritage.

A further broadening of ethnic classifications was seen among respondents who described themselves as 'Black':

*Whenever I tick forms I always say I'm Afro-Caribbean ...[but] I'll say to people I'm a Black person, or I'm a Black woman* (LN65, Black Caribbean woman, aged 38, born in GB)

CL08, who described herself as 'Indian', also inferred that, as a victim of racism, she could also be considered to be 'Black':

*There's general racism, I don't know if it's particularly because of our - it wouldn't have been our religion, it's more race issues... if you ask any Black person they've experienced some form of racism* (CL08, Indian woman, aged 38, moved to GB aged 4)

Although other respondents were adamant that "you could never be called Black" (BM18), highlighting the way in which different ethnic labels have been employed (and considered appropriate) by different people, and at different times, which shall be discussed in more depth in the Discussion section.

Other respondents also used the term 'Black' to include all people of non-white ethnicity:

*in total in terms of using the term 'Black', there was about 5 students, 2 Asians and 3 Black students* (LA17, Black Caribbean male, aged 26, born in GB)

But while decisions about ethnic definitions shifted according to the subject, purpose or audience, the appreciation of ethnic options was also delimited along other lines. Only non-manual respondents mentioned being recognised as 'Jamaican' (LN89), or 'Caribbean', in the Caribbean as an issue, for example.

*I don't really like this ethnicity business because I mean I am actually Black British, I mean my parents aren't from England but this is where I'm from...they came from Jamaica, I couldn't go there and say that I'm Jamaican because they'd never accept it* (LN149, Black Caribbean female, aged 39, born in GB)

So although, as discussed above, LN117's 'Indian lifestyle' may not be recognised as such in India, he still considered himself 'Indian'. It is possible that the apparent concerns about being recognised as 'Caribbean' in the Caribbean are more related to justification (to the external audience) of the shift in label use in Britain, LN149 going on to say:

*so it's a bit, for us first generation born here, it's really difficult because we're always asked, you know, what are you, you know, are you Black Afro-Caribbean, are you Black British, they want to know, well, are you born here, or you know somewhere else, but this is where I was born.* (LN149, Black Caribbean female, aged 39, born in GB)

This conclusion would also be supported by possible assumptions regarding the meaningless nature of a label as broad as 'Caribbean' in Jamaica, Barbados or Trinidad where, as one respondent pointed out, residents enter into island-based cultural superiority/inferiority arguments of their own and as such may be unlikely to recognise what they would consider a Caribbean-wide culture.

So, it appears that people (particularly those from ethnic minority groups) do not see a contradiction in labelling themselves in different ways for different purposes, or in different situations.

*if anyone ever asks me I always say I'm mixed race but we refer to ourselves as Anglo-Indian or, I mean, on looks-wise, people would say I'm Indian, so if I have to tick a box I'll be Asian...when you come onto job opportunities and stuff like that, that's what they're doing it on they're not doing it on, oh, she's mixed race, they're doing it on, you know, what you look like* (LN113, Indian female, aged 27, born in GB)

The apparent security of self-identity found in earlier sections may be related to the perceived purpose of this shift in label use. Often, for example, people were responding to the fixed categories on a form which did not include their preferred label. As a consequence, it was often assumed that data collectors were uninterested in the more nuanced ethnic assessments which were relevant to respondents.

[Why did you choose Indian?] *I think probably that was what was on the form and I probably thought, yes, I ticked it. I don't have a problem with that...I think it's probably that rather than anything else.* [what if it had been blank?] *'I think I would probably still have put Indian actually. Come to think of it because that's how, whenever you fill out forms like for a job...equal opps monitoring forms...they will give you the options of white, Afro-Caribbean, Indian, Other, you know, it tends to be Indian and I think probably I'm just used*

*to ticking Indian and not making a distinction [between 'Indian' and 'Punjabi'] and think well, they don't really care, you know, they don't really differentiate as to which part of India as long as they know it's in India*

(SH07, Indian female, aged 45, moved to GB aged 6)

Unfortunately this quotation suggests that it is the forms SH07 fills which influence her sense of her ethnic identity far more than her own appreciation of who she is which is not even discussed. Importantly, there is a sense, here and in the quotation from LN113 above, that the labels respondents felt obliged to use were not those they would choose for themselves, partly because they were considered insufficiently specific to be meaningful.

*I am Pakistani, I was born and brought up in Pakistan and I have come here from Pakistan, and we are Pathan and erm so we are from the Northern area of Pakistan and I am a Muslim, that's how I would describe myself*

(LA63, Pakistani male, aged 37, moved to GB aged 11)

Among white British respondents, there was also a dissatisfaction with the terminology used. While there was no shift in the labels used by white British respondents to define themselves in the various stages of data collection, the opportunity for further discussion offered by the qualitative interview suggested some differences between the 'imposed' and 'chosen' definers employed. Some of the white British respondents were offered prompts to encourage an ethnic ascription. These prompts usually included the options of 'white' and 'British'. On these occasions, respondents were keen to point out that the label 'white' did not "*mean anything*" (EX18) to them personally. It does not necessarily follow that this unhappiness with being labelled 'white' is evidence that skin colour is unimportant for the definition of ethnicity, but this could lend further support for the conflation of ethnic and national identities by these respondents and the normalisation of white British culture in Britain, suggested above.

*If somebody said, I mean you fill in so many forms nowadays, it would simply be 'White' and 'British' ... The fact that I'm white and not coloured, I'm not particularly too bothered about.*

(EX24, white British male, aged 49, born in GB)

Perhaps in opposition to the imposition of ethnic categories, several respondents stated clearly how they would *define themselves*, as opposed to how others would define them, or emphasised the way in which these imposed definitions disguised more hybrid identities.

*We describe ourselves as British Indians*

(LA40, Indian woman, aged 35, moved to GB aged 3)

*I would say am British and that I am a Muslim*

(LA81, Pakistani woman, aged 26, born in GB)

*if someone asks me if I'm English and that, I say yes but I've got Irish descendants*

*[ancestors]*

(LN128, Irish woman, aged 31, born in GB)

The interviews, particularly those with people who had attended higher education, suggest an important role for external expectations and attitudes, particularly, but not exclusively, those of the ethnic majority group in Britain on people's self-definitions and on their perceived need for multiple ethnic labels. Many of the discussions of ethnic background explicitly described the influence of external attitudes and reactions, and the restrictions that these placed on self-definition.

*I describe myself as Indian...If somebody asks me which ethnic group do you belong to, strictly I could say Indian and because I'm living in this country and then I feel that way as well because I'm not just Indian, because I'm living with other people as well, I feel myself as English as well, Indian/English and European, European/Indian. And that things is sad because my job involves... working with ...Muslim community, if I'm working with them I'm in that situation [I call myself Muslim] but in the first instance, if somebody asks me, I call myself Indian*

(WY03, Indian female, aged 45, moved to GB aged 24)

The use of multiple labels meant that, for some, the perceived need to reclassify yourself according to the responses of the external audience did not seem to produce contradiction or frustration, either because all the different definitions were perceived as relevant - the 'concentric rings' or 'Venn diagram' perspective, described above – or because people felt they could label themselves differently for an external audience while maintaining the ultimate importance of their self-definition:

*It doesn't matter what that stands for [how you're labelled]...as long as you know who you are when you're at home.*

(CL30, Indian female, aged 31, Moved to GB aged 12)

Interestingly, while the ethnic labels chosen by Black Caribbean people seemed to be affected by the racialisation they had experienced as a member of an ethnic minority group in Britain and in their efforts to counteract the impact of racism on the Black community in Britain, being a victim of racism did not appear to influence the ethnic labels applied by Bangladeshi or Indian people to themselves to the same extent. But for some respondents, there was obvious frustration related to the influence of 'others' on their ability to describe themselves as they

wished. This frustration seemed to be a particular issue for those in manual occupations: the recognition of this influence among those with higher education perhaps not considered as restricting. And also, among South Asian groups, for respondents interviewed in English. It is possible that these respondents were more likely to consider the potential applicability of numerous ethnic labels and therefore less concern about the imposition of any particular one.

*At the end of the day you are recognised as Indian, right, and even if you want to be English you will not be accepted...If you fight with it, say I'm English Indian, that will make your life more difficult..you are recognised as Indian so in my opinion I'm proud of it. If someone say I'm Paki, I'm not Paki I'm Indian but I'm proud of being myself... Indians have...three different cultures, Gujarati, Punjabi and Muslim, but ...English people see a brown skin...If they ask you what caste or culture you're from then you explain..I can't see why I have to explain it to them...I'm just Indian, they don't need to know further than that unless something to do with the job or whatever*

(CL30, Indian female, aged 31, Moved to GB aged 12)

*I always Pakistani...you can't change it...because I'm British passport holder now and if I go out people won't say I'm English, they will say, "oh you're Asian...you're coloured"*

(BM52, Pakistani male, aged 45, moved to GB aged 11)

As this first quote would suggest, part of this frustration came from the perceived need to 'explain' the significance (geographical or otherwise) of different labels to people in Britain. A more extreme example being the use of incorrect ethnic identifiers by the perpetrators of racial harassment: "*people didn't like me because I was Indian, well, I was 'Paki'*" (LN117).

*to them it doesn't matter whether you're Pakistani, Indian or Mogadishu or whatever, if you're dark coloured then you're a Paki, you know*

(LA63, Pakistani male, aged 37, moved to GB aged 11)

The role of the external audience can also be recognised in the ethnic label use of those with 'mixed' ethnic parentage, which varied by ethnic group. People with 'Irish' and 'English' parentage appeared enabled to define themselves as 'English' (or 'not Irish'), for example, while people with Black Caribbean or Indian (and British) parentage appeared able only to describe themselves as being of 'mixed ethnicity'. People from ethnic groups 'visibly' different from the white majority were therefore prevented from incorporating even into a group with which they hold some legitimate claim, while people from white ethnic minority groups are allowed to "*blend in*". Indeed, this lack of visibility and the perceived similarity of different

cultures may have also encouraged Irish people to consider themselves empowered (from an internal and external perspective) to label themselves even more broadly.

*I'm half Irish, my mother's Irish, my father was English. So ... I am English, yes, I mean I was brought up here. Northern European might be a better way to put it.*

(LN127, Irish male, aged 44, born in GB)

But, as mentioned above, although people with 'mixed' English/Irish parentage were more likely to describe themselves as 'English' or 'British' than people with parents from other ethnic groups, they also remained keen to emphasise their Irish ancestry and retained contacts with Ireland, or described a sense of solidarity with Irish people.

*I always say English with Irish heritage*

(NT18, Irish female, aged 47, born in GB)

*we've always had close contacts with Ireland... and a feeling of I suppose it's solidarity.*

(LN127, Irish male, aged 44, born in GB)

Being 'European' and emphasising your Irish heritage might also offer a means to 'vacate' the negative connotations perceived in being 'English'.

### **The influence of racism on considerations of groupness**

There was considerable frustration related to the stigma which was imposed on people from ethnic minority groups.

*How long have Black people been in this country and you're still going on with this crap, I should be just as frightened of you bouncing into me and nicking my wallet with my money in it...I've got credit cards like you, I've got money in my wallet...I haven't got a prison record. I've never wanted to do anybody no harm...but this is what people put on us, this stigma*

(BM14, Black Caribbean male, aged 41, moved to GB aged 10)

People were also generally suspicious of the institutions they came into contact with. Again, with a sense that their skin colour was more influential on their life than other aspects of their character:

*being a Black person myself...it's almost as if we're too trusting...you go to your GP... maybe they don't understand what you're saying...so you're mad and they're writing it down and it stays with you for the rest of your life.*

(BM13, Black Caribbean female, aged 42, born in GB)



*we're looking for Black solicitors now that we can trust...because we've got a tendency to believe that when we go and see a white solicitor he believes we're that dumb anyway, he can do whatever he want to do with us*

(BM14, Black Caribbean male, aged 41, moved to GB aged 10)

Indeed, one of the motivations driving desires for ethnically-specific networks was perceptions of and a perceived need to overcome the discrimination faced by people from ethnic minority groups and the limited opportunities afforded to them, as a result:

*It doesn't matter if the system isn't helping you, you've got help - we help ourselves. ...because the system ain't telling us where to go, we've got find out where to go....what we do as a group, if one is stuck we'll ask each other and then we'll find out where to go*

(BM14, Black Caribbean male, aged 41, moved to GB aged 10)

BM14, then, believes that because the formal 'system' does support Black people – so much so that he calls it “*the white system*” – Black people must organise to help themselves “*as a group*”. Despite this call for group action, he also uses this lack of wider support to explain the lack of political and more formal community action by Black people:

*Black people are not going out there [and voting] because no matter what they do nobody listens to them*

(BM14, Black Caribbean male, aged 41, moved to GB aged 10)

Informal ethnically-specific interaction is also considered a means to avoid racial discrimination:

*in Birmingham there's plenty majority Asian, there's not much trouble there...one or two Asian living in majority of white people then they pick on you.*

(BM52, Pakistani male, aged 45, moved to GB aged 11)

*I had an English solicitor, yes, and he was playing to the tune of the police, yes, you know ...my instinct told me, hold on... and you know, I changed, I changed to an Asian solicitor and, you know, the story changed*

(WY32, Pakistani male, aged 35, born in GB)

The social support provided by ethnically-specific networks was also described as important for counteracting the damage caused by racist interactions:

*anybody can understand racism, understand how it works and the factors that influence it, ways to combat it...it's kind of an empathetic relationship, response you need and I don't think you'd get it unless... you've experienced it.* (LN117, Indian male, aged 36, born in GB)

But while it was argued that only people from ethnic minority groups could provide the empathetic support required by those who had experienced racial discrimination. Talking to “Asians that I've met...[about experiences of discrimination because] we understand how each of us feels”, was not sufficient grounds for enduring friendships and support networks:

*because I don't have, say, the same kind of other factors in common, the sort of things that build friendship, I mean I haven't had any shared experiences with them and so on. I mean we might not have the same beliefs in all sorts of other areas*

(LN117, Indian male, aged 36, born in GB)

It would appear, then, that ethnically-specific networks may be utilised in particular circumstances and for particular purposes, while not producing enduring social networks, which might encourage a positive sense of ethnic community affiliation.

These data suggest that instead of engaging in positive action to overcome discrimination, respondents from ethnic minority groups had resigned themselves to a life of repeated victimisation:

*we always got the bit of Paki's and Indians but that's part of growing up...because at the end of the day if you're a Paki you're a going to be called a Paki, but that's part of life. If you're ugly you're going to be called 'ugly' sometimes*

(LA40, Indian woman, aged 35, moved to GB aged 3)

There is a sense that people feel forced to accept the racism they experience: even to the extent that not accepting that an incident is racially motivated and intended to produce disadvantage perhaps becomes part of a means of dealing with experiences of racism:

*I don't let it bother me...if you continue thinking about them [experiences of racism]..you won't get anywhere* (BM18, Black Caribbean male, aged 43, moved to GB aged 13)

People felt obliged to just “get used to” it.

*you can't just shut [the shop] and say, well, I'm going home because I'm getting abuse...you've got a family to feed* (LA63, Pakistani male, aged 37, moved to GB aged 11)

In general, not reacting appeared to be the only way victims of racism could exert any sense of control over the situation.

*...people try and get at you ... if you keep quiet about it they don't win, if you retaliate then they win. So I believe in sometimes you have to take it in your stride*

(LA40, Indian woman, aged 35, moved to GB aged 3)

*when I was younger I've had people calling me racial names and it makes you violent and it makes you want to beat them up and that's what you do at first but you learn that is only going to make more people be racist...Every person with colour has to learn that, to restrain*

(NT25, Black Caribbean female, aged 34, born in GB)

Avoiding repetition of the incidents – through using different shops, for example – further evidence of people's inability to act to reduce the problem by other means.

*you take precautions...personally I don't go out at night you know especially walking...if you go on a bus I don't know if it's...safe* (LN112, Indian male, aged 39, moved to GB aged 8)

It was felt that even simply drawing attention to your preferred choice of ethnic label could cause problems if it did not concur with the opinion of the ethnic majority:

*even if you want to be English you will not be accepted ...If you fight with it, say I'm English Indian, that will make your life more difficult*

(CL30, Indian female, aged 31, Moved to GB aged 12)

Some people did respond, however, in an attempt to try to explain their objections to their treatment. But such responses were carefully considered and often muted:

*they [work colleagues] still use the word 'coloured'...when they turn round and say "coloured", I say "Don't call me coloured"*

(BM16, Black Caribbean female, aged 35, born in GB)

Interestingly, there is a sense that Irish people felt more able to directly respond to the expression of negative attitudes towards Irish people than people from other ethnic minority groups were. LN120, for example, described how he would react to overhearing “*disparaging remarks about the Irish*” “*with the contempt they deserve*”. That Irish people reported less experience, and experience of less severe, racism – “*jokes*” – which could be avoided with the

invisibility afforded by the absence of an accent or treated with an awareness of the likely limited impact those experiences would have on your life more generally could support this recourse to resignation among those victimised more severely and more frequently.

Minimising the impact that racism had on your life also required recognition that you are not the only victim of racism, but that it was part of the life experience for every person considered part of an ethnic minority group in Britain.

*it's not just us, it's other shops as well*

(LA63, Pakistani male, aged 37, moved to GB aged 11)

*it happens all the time as a Black person...I know to expect it really*

(LN149, Black Caribbean female, aged 39, born in GB)

And even that it happened to other people more than it happened to you – women reported being less victimised than men, for example. Respondents were also keen to emphasise that not all white people were racist:

*I think people get jealous sometimes...some people always make way, find ways to discriminate and pick on you...It does happen to everybody, I mean there is good and bad peoples, you know*

(LN46, Bangladeshi female, aged 35, moved to GB aged 16)

To the extent that some people considered treating white people as a homogeneous group as unhelpful as stereotyping Black people:

*But all my friends...had a very stereotypical attitude of them [white people]. ...I found it very hard to go back and accept some of their values, didn't like their anti-Semitism, didn't like their kind of constant kind of negative depiction of White people...I just felt that it's very, very kind of, it's a very ghetto mentality and I just found it increasingly difficult to kind of accept.*

(LN117, Indian male, aged 36, born in GB)

There was also a concern to limit the extent to which perpetrators of racism were seen as operating solely out of a desire to disadvantage people. LN46, above, for example, feeling people were “jealous” of her progress. Other people talked about racism coming about out of people’s ignorance:

*Living in the country, I really did find it difficult because it's everywhere, prejudice is everywhere, it certainly was there anyway. But that was just through ignorance, people that*

*literally hadn't been anywhere in their lives and they didn't know any Black people, didn't know the Irish people, didn't really know women to talk to, if they were male, or males if they were female*

(LN127, Irish male, aged 44, born in GB)

People also commented that people from ethnic groups other than 'English'/'British' could be prejudiced:

*I work for a Jewish firm...and they've got their own discrimination...it's just like the Black and white thing, you know, it's like the Jews have got their own thing, the Muslims don't like the Hindus, so there's always going to be this...even through you're own colour..I mean even in the Black people...I don't like Jamaicans, you know, they're Black...they're quite superior...because their island is bigger than every other island...they try and say that we're all one but they're not [they] think that they're better*

(LN65, Black Caribbean woman, aged 38, born in GB)

As well as a perceived unwillingness among some respondents to label their experiences as evidence of racism, there were problems related to people's ability to recognise the racism they experienced. People reported that they found it difficult to identify particular incidents of racism. Racism was considered to be often less "*direct...I'd say white people would say no, that wasn't racism*" (BM13). People talked about racism being "*hidden*" or "*covert*" and difficult to recognise.

*I think the fact that you have to wait a long time to be served or, you know, the silly things like that or the way you're spoken to...happens all the time but....everyday I do experience, like I said, the covert racism where, you know, sort of people instead of saying excuse me, they'd rather knock you out of the way or barge past you or shut doors in your face*

(LN149, Black Caribbean female, aged 39, born in GB)

Respondents described how they had been too young and "*naïve*" to recognise the racially-motivated nature of their experiences. And also how their education and the portrayal and reporting of incidents of racist victimisation in the media had enabled them to recognise their own experiences of racism, suggesting the importance of both cohort and age effects – in the recognition of racism and racial discrimination more generally.

*when I think back now to the comments that were made, they were racist comments...they were so blatant and then I was so much younger and thing weren't talked about so much in the press or in the media as they are now*

(SH07, Indian female, aged 45, moved to GB aged 6)

*at the time I didn't realise, I mean I can speak like this now because I've done a race and ethnic study degree course and I've had to read about racism and, you know, different cultures, and I can think, ah, you know, these theories make sense and, ah, that's what was happening with my life* (BM13, Black Caribbean female, aged 42, born in GB)

The repetition of similar negative incidents also meant that eventually people might be forced to accept them for what they were:

*I [would] say this isn't a colour thing here so what is it? I'm so short she can't see me, you know? I'm standing here with this in my hand but maybe the expression on my face is saying that I haven't finished deciding what I want, and I would have to go through all these reasons as to why they have chosen not to serve me, you know. And in the end I decided it has to be a colour thing because it happens too often.*

(BM13, Black Caribbean female, aged 42, born in GB)

But there was also a suggestion that racism was not accepted as a reason to explain ethnic disadvantage by, presumably, white people:

*I used to just patiently wait [to be served], I'd be fuming inside but I'd patiently wait because I'd think, well, don't say anything because if I say anything they're going to say, oh, these Blacks, they moan about everything, they always put it down to colour, you know.*

(BM13, Black Caribbean female, aged 42, born in GB)

[So you think you were discriminated in that post?] *Yes...although I hate to admit it because you think, oh, you know, oh, it's the usual excuse they use, they do.*

(SH07, Indian female, aged 45, moved to GB aged 6)

This may suggest that even where people might be able to recognise that they are victims of discrimination, they may feel less able to report it. Perhaps further engendering a sense of themselves as a member of a group which experiences persistent victimisation, even in the absence of recognised opportunities to act to reduce that victimisation. It did not necessarily follow that the recognition of such victimisation would encourage demands for group action or even affiliation, however. Indeed, as mentioned above, for some, reducing the prevalence of racism required not organising:

*when you're pro-Black it doesn't solve the issue ...because all you're doing is creating that barrier where, yes, you have got your identification, let's not mince words here...what else*

*you're doing is building segregation by doing that and not actually addressing the issue of equally balanced, you know, and that's where I'm coming from. I'm not here to say you're white people, you did that to us in the past, you know, what about my colour skin, you know, that stupid attitude, it's dumb, it's stupid. It's about here and now, it's about tackling the fundamental issues that young people are suffering for today, that's what the job is about. It's not about colour, to me it's not about the colour of skin even though the colour of skin plays a part in it.*

(LA17, Black Caribbean male, aged 26, born in GB)

The interviews suggest that the interpersonal racial harassment and violence experienced on a regular basis by many people from ethnic minority groups in Britain has damaging effects on people's sense of who they are and of their personal value. People appeared to adopt a number of physical and psychological strategies to minimise the effects of racism, but each appear to be limited in their ability to prevent further victimisation.

*...I think out of all of it, it isn't being called a Black bastard, you know, that doesn't bother us, believe it or not ...It bothers me when you go for a job and they go, yeah, yeah, and you know you're not getting the job, I prefer somebody - I went for a job once and the White guy says to me I will not give any Black people this class of money, and I says thank you, and I went. I didn't report him. I respected him...*

(BM14, Black Caribbean male, aged 41, moved to GB aged 10)

That BM14 felt disposed towards respecting this potential employer because he had been honest about his racist attitudes gives further insight into the negative position of people from ethnic minority groups in Britain today, and what could be considered to be the extraordinary lengths to which people will go to try to turn elements of this negative situation into potential positives.

*And if you don't like a Black person, you don't like a Black person, that is your choice. There's nothing wrong with that. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that. If I don't like this colour person, I don't like this colour, end of story, it's up to him.*

(BM14, Black Caribbean male, aged 41, moved to GB aged 10)

These discussions are interesting from an identity perspective for a number of reasons. That some people may try and deny the existence, or impact, of racism, while others describe the way in which racism prevents them (even) using the terminology they choose to describe themselves would seem to be a contradiction, particularly given the apparently universal nature of experiences of racism. Empirically, exploring the impact of these positions in terms of a sense of self, and self esteem, is beyond the scope of this investigation but people's reactions would

suggest the prognosis to be poor. Not surprisingly, experiences of racism promote a sense of a need to maintain ethnically-specific networks – to limit the frequency of these experiences and also as an empathetic support network, a reaction encouraged by the apparent lack of support from the institutions established to support the victims of racial discrimination:

*what really bothered me about it was the fact that nobody helped me..I went to the police and I actually got the Race Relations Board involved because the police wouldn't treat it as a racist incident.*  
(NT23, Irish female, aged 40, moved to GB aged 19)

Although it is perhaps informative that a need for such group-wide responses were not more generally recognised, or discussed.

Perhaps most important is the way that these discussions illustrate the way that racist victimisation engenders a sense of group identity, if not necessarily of group responses. People from ethnic minority groups in Britain are a group which experiences racism; which is discriminated against by the 'white system'; and which must learn restraint in the face of the perpetrators. Even if not all white people were considered racist. Discussions described a 'we', an 'us', or a group with which 'I' identify.<sup>15</sup> Interestingly, in the final quote above BM14 discusses someone not liking 'a Black person' (a response to an individual characteristic), rather than 'Black people' (a response to a group stereotype), but then also mentions not liking 'this colour' without any reference to any other characteristic: not liking Black people perhaps, then, similar to not liking black shoes. The use of the term 'coloured' even further engenders a sense of non-description – the importance of this characteristic being that such people, rather than having their own identity and being something, are only not (colourless). As described above, BM16 felt the need to insist that her work colleagues recognised her not only as a person, but as an individual (with a name):

*...when they [work colleagues] turn round and say "Coloured", I say "don't called me Coloured, call me 'Sandra' or call me 'a Black person'"*

(BM16, Black Caribbean female, aged 35, born in GB)

Perhaps the most damaging aspect of discrimination may therefore be related to the disempowerment associated with being treated as 'a colour' rather than an individual: *"she has never ever worked in a company doing what she trained to do... she says papers [qualifications] don't mean jack squat. Yes. It [job decision] wasn't [about] me, it was [about] my colour."* (BM14). Rather than this being an identification of an 'us' in opposition to an 'other', then, this would seem to be an 'us' formed in response to being an 'other' – and not always even an other sufficiently influential to be allowed access to an identity (or even a species) of its own. This



aspect of ethnic identity formation, at least, would seem very much to stem from an external sense of exclusion and powerlessness, rather than an internal sense of belonging and power.

### **Biographies**

As a final section to the qualitative analyses, I present further detail on single individuals as a series of integrated biographies. While in places they include evidence presented elsewhere, I feel these accounts offer important additional insight into the way in which different aspects of the process of ethnic definition, described earlier in this and the preceding chapter, integrate to form an overarching appreciation of an individual's own 'ethnicity': including further evidence as to whether and why certain aspects of this process can override or counteract others and the effect that this may have on the labelling process. I have not adopted a particular systematic procedure in identifying which cases to present in this way. My aim was to provide an overview of the different relationships people had with their 'ethnicity': from those with potentially more internally to more externally driven accounts. Because of the nature of the biographies, these tend to be individuals who have a more nuanced appreciation of their 'ethnicity', compared with others who were included in the qualitative analysis and, indeed, those who were not. Perhaps as a consequence each of these interviews was conducted with people from non-white ethnic minority groups. By coincidence they were also all conducted in English.

#### LA63

LA63 was 37 years old at the time of the interview. He lives near Oldham with his wife and five children, having migrated to Britain from Pakistan aged 12. He currently works in a takeaway, having had his shop repossessed some years earlier. In addition to the financial implications of going bankrupt, he has experienced a loss of self esteem since his shop was repossessed, and he believes this will only return once he has another business of his own. Part of this loss of self-esteem stems from his perception of the responses of the 'Asian community' to his misfortune: a group to which he describes considerable deference and an eagerness to please.

*when it [the shop] got repossessed then obviously, when the word gets in the community ... it's shocking and it's very embarrassing*

His family recently moved, after becoming concerned about the "*bad influences*" in the local area.

He is also concerned about the effect these "*bad influences*" will have on his children and others in 'his' community:

*these days, especially in this country, you know, people are not as religious as they're supposed to be, you see a lot of Muslims drinking these days, you know, into drugs and that sort of things, you know, it's getting weaker, people's faith really.*

He feels that efforts must be made to prevent his culture getting further “*towards the English culture*”: bad behaviour, particularly amongst female children, leading to a negative response from the Asian community.

*Because if your daughter - I've seen girls who run away, Asian girls run away from home and all that and that is the most humiliating thing for a parent in the Asian community, nothing worse than that, no... when a girl does that, no, that's your honour... I've seen some parents leave this country and go back home.*

Related to this, he laments the British laws regarding disciplining your children which are less effective than those practised “*back home*”, in Pakistan:

*it's very hard for parents in this country... you're expected to discipline them [your kids] but sometimes just talking doesn't work so what do you do?...Back home, you know, they're your kids, you discipline the way you want to discipline, if you're going to smack them, you smack them. You know you won't get no social worker round your house saying, well, we're taking your kids away because you smacked them ... plus the humiliation in the community of losing your kid.*

LA63 despairs of his position of trying to preserve his children’s good behaviour, and therefore respect for his family within the Asian community, in an economically depressed area, whilst being aware that providing sufficient discipline to ensure this good behaviour may also lead to social humiliation. That he considers this good name to be an important part of his self-concept and the Asian community an important social network for the maintenance of this ethnic affiliation perhaps needs no reiteration.

For LA63, the concern related to this “*bad behaviour*” is not simply unhappiness at cultures adapting to incorporate aspects of the other cultures which exist around them. Indeed, he perceives himself as having adapted to life in Britain – having taken “*bits from both [cultures] and mixed them up*” – without incurring similar problems: “*I was old enough to understand what was wrong...I had good teachers in the Mosque, you know, they put you in the Mosque, on the straight and narrow as they say*”. “*Culture*” is not then, for him, entirely immalleable. Coping successfully with the more negative influences of, in this case, white English culture,

however, requires a strength which comes from the education and discipline which is obtained via the Mosque which highlights the importance of his identity as a 'Muslim'.

*I mean it's very hard for them [children], living here, having been born here, brought up in England, you know, they have got two cultures to contend with... go to school it's different...it's quite different from home... I was 12 when I came over... there was no hanging about shops and all that. Nowadays that doesn't exist, these days you see them [children] hanging about shops and that's their social life, you know, after school they'll go and start abusing shopkeepers and hanging about shops and all that but I mean when I that age, when I came here, that didn't exist, I mean after school it was straight to mosque, come back from mosque, do your homework and that was it. And when you go to mosque they teach you, you know, all, you know, what you should be taught at that age: respect and about your own culture.*

Indeed, while in many ways he prefers the area where they now live, if he had had the option, he would have remained living in the area he had lived before which provided access to many more "facilities for the Asian, you know, the Mosque and their schools are there and their shops".

There is a sense therefore that he identifies with a broader 'Asian Muslim' community in Britain, than would necessarily be suggested by his Pakistani origins. And he recognises the importance of living in close proximity to this community and their common facilities, despite the other more negative "influences" which exist in the area. Of ultimate importance to his appreciation of ethnic background, however, is place of birth. Having been born in England, for example, he considers his children to be 'English', a position made more compatible with a sense of ancestry by the recognition of the inter-generational maintenance of their 'Muslim' culture: "as long as they don't forget their culture and, you know, where their parents are from". The importance of this Muslim culture also enables the development of inter-ethnic Muslim ties which form a meaningful 'Asian Muslim' community within Britain, allowing him to recognise 'cross-ethnic' similarities in the issues they face.

His experiences of working in his shop, where he was the victim of verbal abuse and also witnessed young children trying to purchase cigarettes and alcohol, have produced a clear distinction in his mind between what he perceives to be a polite and respectful Pakistani Muslim culture and a morally corrupt white English, what he calls "estate", culture. Interestingly, he considers both to have deteriorated recently: white English culture becoming (even) more anarchic and Pakistani Muslim culture becoming more like the white English culture he recognises, as a consequence of the increasing influence of English culture and the reduced influence of Pakistani Muslim culture on the lives of Pakistani Muslim children in Britain. These discussions suggest that, rather than occurring in a vacuum, his appreciation of his own

“culture” stems from the juxtaposition of what he considers ‘English’ and ‘Pakistani’ cultures and his lack of identification with the former, such that he considers himself more affiliated with the latter, which consequently emphasises his ‘Pakistani’ heritage.

While his ‘culture’ is closely related to being Muslim, then, LA63 is clear that his ethnic background is “*Pakistan*” and his community at least in some respects ‘Asian’. His appreciation of this background is related to his memories of life in Pakistan before he migrated.

*It means a lot to you because if you're born in Pakistan, you know, therefore you still have the love of that country in your heart, you know, you can't forget that. And...it's lovely to go back [to visit] and imagine when you were a kid and you used to play there and you used to run about there and you used to do this, you used to do that. And the spices, you know, I mean you can't forget that. But I mean... England, that's our home now, you know, you still feel a loyalty to England but you can't forget where you were born and where you were half brought up anyway.*

The positive memories of life in Pakistan are juxtaposed with his more problematic existence in England, descriptions which are focussed on the financial problems and racist victimisation he faces as well as the wet climate. Indeed, one of his most positive memories of Pakistan relates to being able to “*feel amongst your own, you don't get called ‘Paki’ and all this, you know, you feel free*”. Importantly, in terms of the effect that his experiences of victimisation have for his ethnic awareness, he recognises that racial discrimination affects everyone with “*dark*” skin. As a victim of racial harassment, then, he at times considers himself a member of a much broader group than his Pakistani birthplace, or even his Muslim Asian identification would suggest:

*...it doesn't matter whether you're Pakistani, India or Mogadishu or whatever, if you're dark coloured then you're a 'Paki', you know*

For LA63, the disappointment associated with his unrewarded efforts in his business have been compounded by his repeated abuse. His negative appreciation of ‘white English culture’ encourages his view of the incompatibility of this and his own culture and, through the perceived proscriptions of the Asian community, his obsession with presenting himself and his children as ‘good Muslims’ in the face of these profane temptations, which cause him to grasp more tightly his imaginations of a more respectable and sacred Pakistan and associated culture. At different times in the interview, in reference to different contexts, he considers himself a member of the Pakistani, Muslim, Asian and a victimised community – although his discussion do not suggest that his appreciation of his ethnicity may vary, more that his relationship with his

ethnicity is complex and motivated in response to a variety of issues. It is unlikely that this ethnicity would have manifested itself in a similar manner under different circumstances: highlighting the importance of context in an appreciation of 'ethnic' affiliation.

#### LA17

LA17 was 26 years old at the time of the interview. He was born in Britain and has lived in Britain all his life. In the quantitative interview, he classified himself as 'Black Caribbean'. When asked by the interviewer at the onset of the qualitative interview to 'tell me a little bit about yourself' he responded:

*I'm a young Black man, I'm very assertive, ask a lot of questions, I'm very positive, I'm at university at the moment studying youth and community work.*

This response suggests an awareness of the prominent role his ethnicity plays in his self-concept, albeit as part of a more hybrid, postmodern "identity" (a term he uses spontaneously several times during the interview) which recognises the mutual influences of his age and gender as well as his ethnicity. His dialogue during the remainder of the interview, however, presents a more nuanced appreciation of the meaning, relevance and influence of 'ethnicity' and 'Blackness' in his life which relates strongly to his "environment", particularly in his youth, as one dominated by Black people and affected by the limited opportunities that are disproportionately experienced by people from ethnic minority groups in Britain.

During his childhood, he lived in a deprived area and, partly as a consequence, he and the other children he engaged with behaved in ways he now regrets:

*XX Close...Beirut, they used to call it....it was a dark environment and [bad] things went on. ... It was like that was what was happening, that was the in-thing [preferred fashion]*

After leaving school, he was employed in a series of temporary occupations until he found himself a place on a Youth Training Scheme. His dynamic with his manager became problematic – LA17 concludes during the interview that his manager was "racist" although he does not discuss this in more depth – and he left the scheme and returned to college. At college he, again, "got into the wrong crowd" and started doing things he "shouldn't be doing". But unlike his friends around him and as a consequence of his upbringing and lessons he learnt from his parents he feels that he always appreciated that there were other opportunities available to him if he chose to take them. He could recognise the need for him to develop to a "better attitude" to take advantage of them:

*I was talking to friends and saying, look, as Black people we have to be more [better] role models... we have to have a better attitude for what we're doing... I don't think, we're doing what we're doing because we like doing it basically... [but] it was falling on deaf ears*

He therefore perceives the motivation underlying the behaviour of himself and his friends to be related more to a lack of appreciation for the other opportunities available to them, than through a direct choice related to what it was they wished to do. Part of his motivation for improving his behaviour was his awareness that he needed to present himself to others (including other Black people) in a positive way, to counteract the negativity surrounding the attitudes and behaviour of Black people. Perhaps partly as a consequence of these “deaf ears”, he decided to go travelling. His choice of destinations – the US and the Caribbean – perhaps further evidence of his desire to develop his identity as a “Black...role model”.

*I went travelling at 19, I went just through the States, the Caribbean, on my own, that was a big learning curve, I came back with this Afro [hairstyle], I was like preaching to everybody and, you know, [about] the things that we were doing at the time*

During his travels he developed a strong sense of his identity as a Black person, his role as a Black role model and the need to educate (even ‘preach’ to) others. This enhanced ethnic awareness found physical manifestation in his hairstyle, adopted as a clear indication to others of this strong Black identity.

But the most important aspect of his self-concept – which permeates his interview far more, for example, than his ethnicity – is as a youth and community worker. He describes clearly how he feels that his life now has purpose, and that everything he has done previously has lead him to this position, to be able to pass on what his experiences have taught him to those in his care: “like a giant jigsaw puzzle and the pieces have come together now”. Throughout the interview he describes a wide range of experiences he has had, some of which his ‘ethnicity’ may have played a role in, others not. Each time he describes how he could, or has, used this to educate the young people he works with. So while he would appear to have always perceived of himself as having a clear ‘ethnic’ identity; there are many other facets to who he is, and any of these may be important in the way he relates to the young people he works with:

*for me, my job is about opening myself up so that people can see me. Not see a Black person or a Black man or, you know, a confident face, just to see a person who they can talk to, who they can really identify with sometimes because, you know, you're going through a problem, maybe just say a race issue or something because I've talked about it or I've been through certain situations, they can feel confident in talking to me about that. It could be about*

*information on sexual health, you know, again I open myself, I try to be as true and honest about my sexual behaviour, there's no point in me preaching one thing to them and doing the opposite, you know, because that's a hypocrite... I try to live my life as humble as possible, not glorify myself and not put myself on a pedestal but just be me and let people see me because that's who I am.*

He is aware of the more subtle ways that his 'ethnicity' has influenced his life. He recognises that "*being a Black man in an [educational] institute and coming from the environment that I came from*" may have encouraged his feelings of isolation when he first attended university, and his concern that the students from different ethnic groups were not "*mixing*" or "*mingling*". The ethnic profile of his childhood environment and social networks, then, meant that this was the first time he had felt 'deviant', in terms of his ethnicity: in comparison with that of those around him and in keeping with the ethnic profile of many higher education "*institute[s]*" in Britain. This is also apparent in his description of himself as a "*a young Black student*" when he attended a new university in his second year: describing how his personality as an individual had to be reestablished to enable people to overcome the assumptions made about him based on his age, ethnicity and occupation. He perceives this 'ethnicity' to be multifaceted in its potential to influence his life and those of the young people he works with. It may be meaningful in terms of being the victim of racism, living with the problems associated with the deprived areas where Black people are often concentrated or feeling isolated in an educational institution. It may also be inconsequential, and his role as educator may be as a sexual individual, someone who has experienced mental illness, a young person, a man or simply as someone approachable to talk to.

This appreciation of 'ethnicity' as a more subtle and sophisticated influence also produces a sense of unhappiness regarding the static and meaningless nature ascribed to the concept of 'ethnic background' as it is treated in research more generally. When, during the interview, he is asked about his ethnic background, he responds by deconstructing the various measures that are often used bureaucratically to establish 'ethnic groups', including geographic and ancestral heritage, skin colour and any other criteria which cannot recognise the subtle variations in people's own experiences of their lives and the way it is influenced by their ethnicity:

*I've just been debating it [ethnic background] with this woman in XX, she's very pro-Black and she says that she sees me as a young Afro-Caribbean and I says what makes you say that? I don't identify myself as that because Afro-Caribbean, when I go to the Caribbean they see me as English first and foremost.... I don't affiliate myself with that because I'm not from there. My parents are from there and if you want to say that I'm Afro-Caribbean descent then fair enough, even then I don't even associate myself with that because ... like*

*Black Americans having their identity, they call themselves Black Afro-Americans....Yes, if you want to identify me in a class group then what I would say to myself is I am Black Afro-British. Do you know what I mean? ...it's stupid because, at the end of the day, you know about the slave trade now, Africans were shipped all round the world...so you can say yes, the Black man did derive from Africa or whatever but right here and now I am Black Afro-British, that's what I am, I was born here, raised here, this is my culture, yes, the only thing that you can really identify me as the colour of my skin, you know, and even then it gets stupid because, if you look at me, the colour of my skin is not black, it's brown, do you know what I mean, so it gets ridiculous about personal identity.*

His response to his discussant also highlights the way in which he feels ethnic background is used by powerful others (*"if you want to identify me"*) to label individuals in meaningless even *"ridiculous"* ways which are of no significance to the person being labelled, and refuses to accept any of the variety of labels which might be imposed, as opposed to what *"I would say to [call] myself"*. He highlights the potential contradiction between measures which label someone according to geographical or ancestral heritage and those that employ distinctions based on place of birth, upbringing and 'culture'. He also draws attention to the geographical specificity of such labels – that while he might be considered 'Caribbean' in Britain, in the Caribbean, he would be considered 'English'. His idea of *"class groups"* suggests a recognition of a purpose behind classifying people, but also an underlying frustration with the inflexibility of this approach and also a concern that this encourages the development of factions. Perhaps most importantly, he feels that this treatment of 'ethnicity' does not recognise any of the ways in which 'ethnicity' may actually influence an individual's life and also prevents them from establishing a meaningful sense of who they are, including how they feel their 'ethnicity' may contribute, or not, to their own "identity" as an individual with a unique relationship with the various aspects of their character as it relates to their own particular history at any one point in time (*"right here and now"*). LA17 also appears unhappy about associating himself with the negative position of Black people in the past. He voices a concern that adopting a particular classification encourages others (in external powerful groups) to do the same, which leads to disadvantage and social segregation.

*when you start labelling and putting yourself in this class group then you're making it an issue where people come and place you in groups*

And also that prioritising one aspect of your character over the others encourages assumptions of ethnic homogeneity and therefore, potentially, victimisation, and ignores the other aspects of the lived experience of being a member of British society.



*my job is about me being [name], the person, the name on my birth certificate, that's me, you know, not the colour of my skin, not the way I act, the way I portray myself is important as a young Black role model... Well, I don't even say it's as a young Black role model, what I see myself as a role model in terms of the environment I've grown up in, yes, I've been through it, this system being, you know, be ridicule, sign your name in the Benefit Office and, you know ... it's like putting your X there, you have no real identity.*

Elsewhere in the interview he describes his concerns that demands for ethnic categorisation may encourage a fixation with the past, distracting attention from the issues of the present and future, and preventing the development of the 'inter-ethnic' integration and support which is necessary to overcome them:

*when you're pro-Black it doesn't solve the issue...because all you're doing is creating that barrier where, yes, you have got your identification[but]... what else you're doing is building segregation by doing that and not actually addressing the issue of equally balanced, you know, and that's where I'm coming from. I'm not here to say 'you're white people, you did that to us in the past, you know, what about my colour skin?', you know, that stupid attitude, it's dumb, it's stupid. It's about here and now, it's about tackling the fundamental issues that young people are suffering for today, that's what the job is about. It's not about colour, to me it's not about the colour of skin even though the colour of skin plays a part in it.*

His 'ethnicity' is part of but does not dictate his life. He recognises the importance of his 'ethnicity' to the way he is seen by others and how this has affected his experiences, but its influence varies and this aspect of who he is does not override any other. His initial statement, and those relating to his being a "Black role model", refer both to his perception that he is perceived in this way and also that in certain situations it has relevance, rather than that it holds primacy in his own self-concept. For LA17, the categories offered by more bureaucratic measures are meaningless and serve to create more problems than they solve. While his labelling of this ethnicity as 'Black Afro British' may have relevance in his life, the nature of this relevance can not be appreciated by any of the more formal measures employed. Perhaps his greatest frustration stems from his sense of his inability to vacate this 'ethnicity', even at those times when it is considered to have no consequence.

## BM52

BM52 was 44 years old at the time of his interview. He has been living in Birmingham for the past 15 years with his wife and six children. For the past ten years he has been unemployed, due to poor health produced by a heart condition and diabetes. This has produced some financial and also mental health problems. He migrated to Britain from Pakistan at the age of 12, although he returned for a year aged 22 during which time he got married. He has only visited Pakistan once since then. He would like to visit more frequently but does not have the financial resources to do so. He refers to Pakistan as “*our country*”, suggesting both close ties with a homeland, and also a strong sense of an ethnic community associated with it. It is therefore perhaps not surprising that when he is asked about his ethnicity, or ethnic origin, he replies: “*Oh, I [am] always Pakistani, you know, I mean you can’t change it from there, it doesn’t matter where you go, it’s culture, your mother images like, you know*”. His way of life is closely bound to his cultural heritage, his memories and sense of ‘normality’ established in Pakistan, which will always remain with and which he feels define him. But while this would suggest an appreciation of a form of ethnicity which has ongoing relevance in his life, and meaning beyond any particular geographical context, he goes on to describe how this perceived immalleability is in some senses imposed:

*I mean you can’t change it [from ‘Pakistani’] because I’m British passport holder now and if I go out people won’t say I’m English, they will say, ‘oh, you’re Asian’ or this or that, yes ... if I say, ‘oh yes, I’m English’, they say ‘no, you’re not...you’re coloured’...people [look] from the outside, they hold British passport, they’re citizens, it says that they’re ‘Indian’, ‘Pakistani’, ‘Egyptian’, ‘Arabic’, ‘African’.*

As a British passport holder, BM52 considers himself justified in labelling himself ‘English’ – in addition to his identification with being Pakistani – but his experience in Britain has shown him that people are given access to Britishness “*from the outside*” and according to skin colour. He believes that no one without white skin will be accepted as being English and therefore feels himself amongst a group of other non-white people who, despite their British citizenship, will remain excluded from labelling themselves even in legitimate ways. He is also aware that place of birth does not necessarily offer access to certain ethnic labels, contradicting some of the comments made in chapter 4:

*I mean I always say [to my children] ‘you’re British’, you know, ‘you’re born here’, they say ‘no, dad, you’re Pakistani, I’m Pakistani’...I always say, ‘oh, you’re British anyway’, sometimes they just laugh, ‘how can I be? They call me ‘Paki’ now in the school’.*

So, his children recognise that 'ethnicity' may be inherited from your parents and ancestors. Recognising their 'Pakistani' heritage also enables them to explain their exclusion from the use of other labels which they might otherwise consider appropriate.

When describing the victimisation he experienced as a child, BM52 draws comparison with the experiences of the other "Asian" children in the school, recognising the commonality in their experiences. He also describes an incident in the early 1970s when he was "pick[ed] on" by some "skinheads" but failed to get any support from the police: "*the police come over, just said to me, come on, son, you go on*". Furthering this discussion of the institutional racism which exists in Britain, he also expresses concern that people from ethnic minority groups experience unfair treatment by the British judicial system:

*I know that if the white children done the same crime, if you're Black or Pakistani or Indian, you get more sentence in the prison... people who are making the law and the Government who is running the laws, when you think 'That's prejudice'... when they say the law is fair, it's not fair.*

He again highlights cross-ethnic commonalities in the experiences of racist victimisation. In the quotation above, this commonality exists because racism may be experienced by anyone from non-white ethnic groups in Britain. In the following quotation, he manages to limit the problematic nature of racist violence and prejudice by describing it as a problem which exists everywhere, and is therefore unavoidable wherever there is a power imbalance, establishing an experiential community between stigmatised groups across the world:

*I mean that's a fact in every country...I mean it's like the majority in Birmingham, there's plenty majority Asian, there's not much trouble there...One or two Asian living in majority of white people then they pick on you. The same thing, I mean I would say the same thing I think with Asian majority, if there's any English or white bloke there and children around, like 15 or 20 year [old] maybe, I think they say something, I bet they pick on them. I mean I wouldn't say one community is alright to another one, I mean where there is a majority there's always something going on like they argue this or that, you know, by your colour or by your – that's it... prejudice is every country*

So, BM52 perceives his life, his self-concept and that of his children as being restricted by the attitudes of the more powerful people around him. He counters this negative position by drawing attention to the parallels between his experiences and those of others: other Asian people in Britain and other unempowered groups. He also responds to this marginalisation by making efforts to draw attention to his positive appreciation of his Pakistani identity, the ways

in which it retains meaning in his life, and the ways in which he remains *"proud of what I am, it doesn't matter [that I'm not accepted as being English]...I'm proud I'm Pakistani"*. It is telling that this pride is established, at least in the interview, in response to exclusion.

#### BM14

BM14 is a 42 year old man who migrated to Britain from Jamaica when he was nine years old. He is currently unemployed following an accident at work which damaged his knee. His injury still causes him a lot of pain, despite having had several operations to repair it. He also has a *"blood disorder"* which, while similar to sickle cell, he perceives as a disorder which is more prevalent in Asia, supporting ideas of a more genetic and static form of ethnicity:

*Black people usually get sickle-cell, Indians get another version of it and I've got a trace so somewhere in the family genes there is Asians*

His supposed genetic link with *"Asians"* does not produce confusion in his sense of himself as a Black person, however, potentially contradicting some of the arguments around 'natural' or 'technical' ethnicity described in chapter 4. He also discusses his opinions on why *"Black people have got this high blood pressure"* which he puts down to the *"high carbon"* and *"highly starched food"* which Black people eat and that *"back home we sweat, you don't sweat in a cold country so all this stuff build up in your body"*. So while there could be considered to be a cultural profile to these habits, they are only problematic in Britain, where the climate is less appropriate for these behaviours. These behaviours may therefore develop in response to a particular environment rather than being enduring cultural habits which may be seen to define a particular population and require maintenance as part of a particular form of ethnic identification. He also describes his unhappiness at his mother's insistence that he retain links with his Jamaican culture through his use of language: *"our parents, right, done us wrong... because I used to speak perfect English and my mum used to say I'm not English and she used to whack me, 'you've got to learn to speak your way', so now I speak like this, halfway between [Jamaican Creole and English]."* There was, and remains, no desire to retain behavioural links with his Jamaican 'homeland' and this therefore does not constitute an important aspect of his appreciation of his 'ethnicity'.

So while he describes grounds for more genetic and behavioural definitions of 'ethnicity', he also believes such difference is insufficient to explain the disadvantage faced by Black people in Britain. For him, Blackness is more about exclusion than culture. And he describes at length the negative experiences he, and others, have had since migrating to Britain which have affected his attitude towards the British *"system"* which in turn have affected his attitude towards his 'ethnicity' and the need for an ethnically-focussed community:

*I've never wanted to be hateful, when I came to England I had a lot of ambitions...and you got a slap, I mean when I came ... there was what, about 4 Black people in the whole road, yes... there was about 15 Blacks in the whole school, about 5 Indians, and we got taunted and, you know... that taunting done this [made me hateful] ... from then it just went down the drain.*

So his hopes were quickly quashed by his early experiences of racism. He describes his awareness that Black employees are systematically disadvantaged in Britain and that as a consequence the opportunities for a successful career are limited as a Black person: so much so that he calls it the “white system”:

*That destroyed my life, that did, it destroyed my belief in the system. Now there is a colour bar to a standard, if a Black person gets a job he has got to be good, he has got to be darned good to get that position, yes?... I'm not saying white people aren't good...[but] we know we've got to be better, yes.... We push to a standard that white people don't even understand.*

His repeated use of the term ‘we’ indicates his identification with this group of Black disadvantaged workers, and the influence this has on his appreciation of the meaning of being ‘Black’.

He also describes the loss of self-esteem his wife experienced when she was seeking employment. Her disappointment at being treated like a “colour” rather than as a skilled individual caused her to decide to remain unemployed. Their son had a different reaction when he was unfairly stopped by the police: becoming stressed, angry and stigmatised. Here BM14 also mentions the way in which the stigmatising of individuals can be reflected on by other members of an ethnic group such that it becomes part of their own appreciation of their position in society:

*I mean the police stopped my son...he has never been in trouble... he wants to know why. Then because of that he gets on the aggressive side, gives the police grief, the police giving him grief, either they lock him up or they let him go but he walks off with a stigma and he comes home mad. And he's giving it a big one in his bedroom saying why should this be done to me... because he has got friends who are white, it ain't done to them...he can see people selling drugs on the street, he knows the houses, he has watched his friends got killed over it and the police did nothing about it...and then he comes and tells his mum about it and then she's going, see, my son is being picked on by the system. And she gets stressed. Yes, no*

*matter what you do... If a person can be treated right, be they Black or be they White, you will work and you'll be happy.*

In addition to his own frustration which stems from being denied fair treatment, he also expresses concern for those Black victims who do not recognise the discriminatory nature of their experiences. He worries, as a consequence, that this lack of economic success will be internalised and that people will perceive themselves as being of less value than those (white people) in employment:

*I know people, Black people who are highly intelligent and they can't, they go for the same job [as white people] and they don't get it... So then you get Black people feeling that they're bad, they're crap, you know, they believe that they're worth nothing.*

He also describes the way unfair treatment can produce aggression and jealousy, even amongst those who should be supported each other as a community:

*I know Black people will just retaliate on White people for no reason... there's no need for it, that's stupidity but it's also anger... Black people turn round and say they see them things, seeing slavery...they take it personal... the ones [Black people] who made it up there [became successful], they do look down [on the rest of the Black community] and then you get this stigma between Blacks and Blacks and then you've got the job lots and the guns are coming and it's our own kids who are shooting each other.*

Like LA17 above, becoming fixated with issues of the past are considered to detract attention from overcoming the problems of the present. Perhaps particularly telling in terms of its longterm impact is the way in which BM14 compares different forms of racist victimisation:

*I think out of all of it, it isn't being called a Black bastard, you know, that doesn't bother us, believe it or not, it does not. If someone did, I'd go have a nice day...It bothers me when you go for a job and they go, yeah, yeah, and you know you're not getting the job, I prefer somebody - I went for a job once and the white guy says to me I will not give any Black people this class of money, and I says thank you, and I went. I didn't report him. I respected him... if you don't like a Black person, you don't like a Black person, that is your choice. There's nothing wrong with that. There is absolutely nothing wrong with that. If I don't like this colour person, I don't like this colour, end of story, it's up to him. He has got his rights not to like a Black person or not to like a Jew or whatever, so I gave him respect for that and I went about my business. What I don't like is people pretending that they're going to do this and they're stabbing you in the back.*

He feels institutional racism to be both more problematic and upsetting than interpersonal racism: pretending to operate fairly while being discriminatory worse than calling someone a 'Black bastard'. That he "*respected*" someone for being honest about being racist, and believes they have "*rights not to like a Black person*" clearly indicates the impossible situation Black people find themselves in. That it "*doesn't bother us*" suggests both that it is a widespread experience, and also that it is the basis for a form of ethnic identification and community awareness.

Early in the interview he describes a feeling of hostility towards his mother because she did not appreciate the difficulties he faced while being victimised at school. Her experiences with white people were more positive, so she did not appreciate the real affect of the "*white system*":

*my mum believed in the system, the white system, then you had a certain amount of white people that were with [supported] Black people, you know ... there was always one decent one, you know, that didn't care what colour you was or, you know, and I think she, next-door, Mrs. Wilmott, she helped my mum get her first house in England.*

He is also quick to indicate that, in his own experience, not all white people are racist, and that even those that are have been indoctrinated by the British Government rather than being driven by personal malice. He feels this indoctrination and associated frustration is exacerbated by events which are reported as 'race-related' and so problematise Black people when there are no grounds to do so:

*I remember the XX riot ... there was loads of white kids up there... It wasn't a Black thing. It was a people thing, right... We're not different from anybody else, we just get pigged off of being treated different.*

He also recognises prejudices in other communities with which he has had contact where people judge others "*from the outside*" without discovering the truth, drawing similarities between the experiences of Black people in Britain and other stigmatised groups:

*Kashmir, Pakistani and India, they class themselves as being different...It's like saying it's Jamaica, Barbados or that sort of thing, or the English, the Irish, Scots, you know what I mean, it's on the same sort of thing...you lot don't want to come into our house because you believe that we're below you... you make your own judgment from the outside of what we are...Indians as just as racist as anybody else.*

But while he considers there to be some cross-ethnic similarity and potential group affiliation based on being the victim of racial discrimination and harassment, he also perceives ethnic variations in the community support provided by the British Government, in providing ethnically-focussed community facilities for example, which encourages a sense of unjust disadvantage and undermines this sense of cross-ethnic commonality:

*The Irish, they've got their social clubs, the Government have given them a fund, put money into it and they've got somewhere to go that's decent. The Indians, they'll build their temples or whatever and that. Now us, we've got nothing... you show me what clubs Black people have got*

As a consequence of this disadvantage, he believes the situation for the Black community in Britain, particularly young people, to be deteriorating faster than for people from other ethnic groups:

*There's no community centres ...there's not one place for the Black kids... Yes, there's nowhere for them to go and sit down or...they're all on drugs round here, the lot of them. Because they can't go anywhere.*

This lack of support further encourages the sense of apathy and institutional distrust among the Black community, as well as, for BM14 at least, a sense of unity in disadvantage:

*when it comes to the part in life with the Government and stuff... you go and vote and you've got to go and do this, Black people are not going out there [to vote] because no matter what they do nobody listens to them...There's nobody taking account of what we want*

Faced with a lack of support from the “white system”, the only opportunity for success among members of the Black community will come from helping themselves, and each other, and locating professionals which the community feels they can trust:

*It doesn't matter if the system isn't helping you, you've got help - we help ourselves...together and once we know what to do, we know where to go because the system ain't telling us where to go, we've got find out where to go. Now...what we're doing now, what we do as a group, if one is stuck we'll ask each other and then we'll find out where to go... If we can't get what we need out of the system we just find a way round it and if we try to go, we're looking for Black solicitors now that we can trust, that's what we believe we do trust, because we've got a tendency to believe that when we go and see a white solicitor he believes we're that dumb anyway, he can do whatever he wants to do with us*



His appreciation of the need for the Black community to help themselves produces a sense of anger at Black people who manage to become economically successful but do not use this success to support other Black people who have been less fortunate.

*the problem with Britain, right, ...parents are trying hard to get their kids out of the squalor ...when they fight for their kids to get this education to get something better, yes, then they forget about where they, they're telling their kids 'forget about when you come from', don't want to know... You've got all these Black footballers, right, and these sports people, they make it to the top, they don't go back and say, well, there are still Black kids round here that are wanting help out.*

Here, 'forgetting where you came from' refers to the British-based Black disadvantaged community, rather than an ancestral homeland abroad.

BM14, then, does describe support for a more genetic appreciation of ethnic difference, but this is only of limited value in his understanding of his relationship with his 'ethnicity', and particularly his 'ethnic community'. His interview is saturated with comments on the similarities between people from different ethnic groups and how racist victimisation is driven from a failure to appreciate these similarities. And how the systematic unjustified disadvantage experienced by certain ethnic groups stems from this victimisation and responses to it from the Black community: be they focussed on community organisation, violence or apathy. What is perhaps most upsetting is the sense of impotence to fundamentally alter this disadvantaged position: the white system will remain unaltered. For people from ethnic minority groups – particularly those without any institutional support – overcoming this disadvantage requires recognising this victimisation and channelling efforts into organising as a community to try and overcome it. Genes, customs, geographical heritage and history, beyond the repetitious nature of his mistreatment, are of no consequence to such an appreciation of 'ethnicity'. Behaviours are only of interest where the police disinterest in the selling of illicit drugs and the "job lots" of "guns" mean that Black people are "shooting each other" and getting killed rather than helping each other. Again, more traditional measures of 'ethnicity' seem limited in their usefulness in engaging with this aspect of 'ethnicity'.

## LN117

LN117 is a 36 year old Indian man. His parents migrated from Gujarat to a small town in Yorkshire during the late 1950s and early 1960s and had five children, of whom he is the second eldest. His family moved home when he was young and he went to school in Blackburn. Brought up as an “*Indian Muslim*”, he was “*being trained to be a Muslim cleric*”, a “*mullah*”, before he became disillusioned with his faith during his early teenage years. He moved to London in 1982. After an early career as a teacher, he is in the process of retraining to become a barrister.

In response to his discussion early in the interview of the problems he has experienced in his local residential area, LN117 is asked whether these negative experiences have ever included racially motivated verbal or physical violence. He responds by saying that compared with his experiences in northern England, he has been “*very lucky in London*”. And that although he experienced “*lots of racial abuses*” when he first moved to London, on a par, even, with his experiences in Blackburn, more recently “*it has happened occasionally but it’s just not something that I notice*”. This lack of recognition stems from two interrelated factors: the nature of his experiences as a child in comparison with those today, and the way in which racial discrimination and harassment manifests in London.

He perceives there to be less racism in London in the 1990s and 2000s, compared with Blackburn in the 1970s:

*at secondary school ... every half-term, end of term, invariably a sort of mini-riot between Asians and English kids...It was just the time, I mean the seventies were kind of quite grim, and politically I can understand the sort of unemployment, the values were different, the National Front were quite politically active so - it's not the same now.. I don't know how I coped, I mean I do know doing things like not, trying not to be scared, standing up to kids, fighting them when I didn't really want to fight...We looked at it as routine... families kind of understood but it's difficult to explain, it wasn't kind of - now if it happened, you know, there would be uproar amongst families but then it was so common, it was just accepted as it happened. You got used to being abused*

He found these experiences particularly difficult to deal with as a consequence of the positive inter-ethnic relationships he had experienced as a very young child:

*my dad got left with this house ...it was kind of slap bang in a very English area, we were the only Indian family, the next-door neighbours were really nice... I kind of grew up speaking English almost as a first language, with Auntie Edith...it was kind of quite a positive*

*experience of English people. First at infant school, the white kids and Indian kids just didn't mix, it was just kind of like they just spent all playtime beating each other up ... I found that quite a shock.*

This was a shock even to the extent that he considers these early positive experiences with white people “unlucky”:

*... my experience of white people was very positive, but it was also kind of very non-judgmental because I hadn't actually had any problems with it because they'd been so nice... when I moved to Blackburn because in the Asian area there was lots more racism and also as I was growing up I noticed it and it was OK, you know, Aunty Edith was fine, Junior was fine next-door but most people weren't at that time*

This discussion presents the way in which even positive interethnic relationships can exaggerate an individual's awareness of the stigma associated with aspects of their ‘ethnicity’, even long after the relationship has ended. Also interesting here is the use of the terms ‘Indian’ and ‘Asian’ to designate a local ethnic community. While his family, and the other (non-white) children at his infant school, are primarily ‘Indian’, there are sufficient similarities, at least in terms of their victimisation, between different South Asian groups to consider them all ‘Asian’, when he moves to Blackburn and attends secondary school.

In London at the present time, he considers racially motivated verbal or physical interpersonal violence to be almost absent from his daily life, compared with this “*reference point*” of his experiences as a child. But that is not to say that racist discrimination does not exist in London: rather that it is more subtle and institutionalised compared with that which occurred when “*values were different*” and racism was more socially acceptable and therefore more overt.

*in London most of the racism I probably experience is kind of hidden racism, not getting promotions and being patronised, that kind of stuff... I know the last place I was [working] at... the proportion of Asian staff was, you know, very, very small compared to the actual proportion and that sort of stuff ... I just used to think, you know... you will say the right things but deep down [you're racist], you know... the portion of kind of minorities at the Bar is ridiculous, it seems to be very resistant to any kind of change and you have to kind of like keep on acting.*

He repeatedly describes the difficulty he has coping with the situation “*minorities*” experience in certain institutions where he feels himself perpetually disadvantaged. He describes his

increasing sense of hopelessness that despite his continued efforts to “*keep on acting*”, to “*force himself to work*”, they will be in vain. Undeniable recognition of the disadvantage faced by people from ethnic minority groups is established through contact with people who have had similar experiences – to the extent that the disadvantage is sufficiently systematic to produce a statistically recognisable trend. People are forced to recognise their experiential commonalities.

*the thing about institutional racism, statistically after a while you can't explain away these things just on individual explanations and it's kind of speak to other people in different [ethnic] groups at college and they've had the same kind of experience... I think sometimes it's worse than being abused on the streets*

Reminiscent of the comments made by BM14, above, verbal or physical abuse is considered at least honest in its actions, unlike institutional racism which presents itself as fair and encourages continued commitment and effort even in the face of rising hopelessness: “*I do find it very tiring having to kind of, constantly having to sort of make up ground which you can't make up*”

Despite his earlier experiences of positive ethnic integration with his white neighbours, coping with his experiences of racism at school required LN117 to develop ethnically-specific social networks:

*kind of difficult to explain that was what it was like, so you didn't kind of, didn't get any support from your family because there was nothing in the way of support, if you got beaten up they'd look after [you], they'd make you feel good about it, the rest of the sort of coping came with sort of friends, you'd stick to your own kind, very look after each other as much as possible.*

Since moving to London, however, his friendships have become more ethnically mixed, to the extent that he comments: “*most of my friends are English*”. Interestingly, while he considers his ‘English’ friends in London to be “*almost like family*”, “*most of my Indian friends in Blackburn aren't really friends*”, and he maintains little contact with them:

*all my friends [at school] had different attitudes, they hadn't had any positive experience of white people, they just had a very stereotypical attitude of them. Even though I understood it and I kind of became a part of it for a while, I think when I moved away from Blackburn and came to college and started meeting English people again, I found it very hard to go back and accept some of their values, didn't like their anti-Semitism, didn't like their kind of constant kind of negative depiction of white people. I could understand it and I still understand it, but given that we've all grown up together and we've gone through school and*

*college together and we weren't stupid, I just felt that it's very, very kind of, it's a very ghetto mentality.*

He views his relationship with his Indian friends in Blackburn as a relationship borne out of “a necessity” driven by the need to “stick together”, rather than a desire. This is not to suggest that his friendships in London are not without problems, however, which are highlighted particularly when he feels victimised by racial discrimination, which requires “an empathic relationship...and I don't think you'd get it ... unless you've experienced it. In seeking support for such experiences he turns to “other Asians, actually, the Asians that I've met, well, you don't have to say anything to each other, this is the whole thing, we understand how each of us feels”. But interestingly, when asked whether he would count these ‘Asian’ people as his friends, he replies: “Strangely enough, no, because I don't have, say, the same kind of other factors in common, the sort of things that build friendship...any shared experiences with them...we might not have the same beliefs in all sorts of other areas”. Again, then, these ethnically-specific networks would seem, like those of his childhood, to be relationships borne out of necessity rather than anything more potentially enduring.

But despite the most successful social networks he has developed being ethnically-mixed, and his concerns and also awareness of his lack of commonalities with social contacts he has made with other ‘Indian’ and ‘Asian’ people, he still considers himself to be ‘Indian’.

*Because that's my ethnic background. I mean in most other ways I'm probably better described as 'British' in terms of all sorts of attitudes and beliefs but in terms of ethnicity I'm still, I suppose, Indian.*

When asked what ‘ethnicity’ means to him he responds:

*Core beliefs, upbringing, skin colour as well, to be honest, as simple as that. I mean I'm second-generation, so the generation before me are all Indian, they all came here as Indians. And I was brought up very much as a sort of Indian Muslim, although I don't sort of have very religious beliefs and... I don't really have very many things about me that you could pinpoint as being Indian, I don't really speak the language particularly well these days, I've kind of lost touch with it because I speak English most of the time and most of the family do as well now. The fact that I was kind of brought up in that environment, I suppose I still see myself as Indian.*

So despite not maintaining core beliefs or practises which would “pinpoint” him as being ‘Indian’, the “environment” of his upbringing surrounded by ‘Indians’ who had migrated from

India and his skin colour mean that he perceives himself as being 'Indian'. Interestingly, when asked why he does not describe himself as being 'Gujarati' or 'Asian', his response suggests that each may be considered relevant – similar to the concentric rings approach to labelling described earlier in this chapter – and also that he perceives 'ethnicity' as a statement of origins rather than an "identity":

*I mean I've never been much, been too specific in the sense of [geography] and normally if the only choice open is to tick 'Asian' then that's what it is, it's the Asian subcontinent but otherwise, you know, it's 'Indian', that's where my immediate family are from, and that's about it really. But I mean I don't really see it as kind of any, it's not an identity, it's more of a kind 'state of what your origins are'.*

He feels he has Indian heritage which is evidenced in the nature of his upbringing. That it does not constitute an 'identity' would suggest that he does not perceive this background as influencing his daily life (through his beliefs or behaviours, for example), other than in terms of responses to his skin colour. But he also perceives the meaningful application of particular labels to shift in response to this background. While suggesting that it may be considered an appropriate label, his discussion suggests that he does not consider himself 'Gujarati', because any customs which could be considered 'Gujarati' (rather than more generally 'Indian' or 'Asian') have been lost with residence in Britain. Similarly, he feels his children "*probably would find it difficult to put down India*", on account of his not bringing them up in an 'Indian' environment, with 'Indian' customs: "*all they would get would be like second-hand through grandparents*". So, the use of ethnic labels shifts as customs adapt, as "*link[s]*" with the customs of the homeland get broken:

*initially when the Mosque was set up in Blackburn it was very much Gujaratis only from certain villages around where the majority were Gujarati, would have their little mosque in their little area, now the main Mosque I think has got Pakistani boys there, Bengali boys, girls, so because of that, English has become kind of a common language so already that language link has been broken, without anyone actually even thinking about it, it just happened.*

But he also suggests that the customs considered to define a particular ethnic group may adapt to life in Britain without it being acknowledged. The meaning of a definition may shift independent of the name, such that behaviours remain considered evidence of, for example, an 'Indian' lifestyle despite that custom potentially holding no meaning elsewhere, such as in India itself.

*most of my memories of India are second-hand ...but [my appreciation of being Indian] it's mostly through living with my parents. So 'we're Indian, we do that, we do that, we have this way of eating, that way of eating, this way of doing stuff', so it's already kind of second-hand really, it's not really an 'Indian' life, it's kind of what 'Indian' ought to be in England*

That these customs may not have meaning elsewhere does not appear to trouble LN117. That they enable some sense of social network seems sufficient for him to feel that they have served their purpose, regardless of their particular origins. His perception of 'ethnicity' is therefore perhaps more relevant in terms of establishing groupness for older generations, immediately post migration, than there being a need for this 'ethnicity' to have any enduring, cross-generational significance. In this way, he does not "*find it a problem*" that "*as you grow older and you go off to college and do other things, that [the Indian lifestyle] kind of gets watered down*".

This lack of concern regarding the redefinition of Indianness partially stems from his awareness of some of the more negative aspects of 'traditional' Indian culture: "*it was kind of a traditional shitty Indian thing*". His disillusionment with the Mosque also stemmed from the perceived amalgamation of Indian/Asian and Islamic customs, and what he sees as the hijacking of Islam to promote negative, separatist Indian or Asian traditions and the repackaging of ethnic issues as Muslim ones:

*I was really close to Islam and the Koran, I wasn't at all close to the kind of mixed up Indian values that went with it... I didn't really feel it was Islam at all, it was just basically Indians being very, being insecure, not really having the kind of political know-how to realise what it was making them feel insecure so they kind of, they almost like created this Islamic persona and then decided everybody hated Islam rather than saying, well, we hate it [you] because you're Paki's*

Again, as happened with his Indian friends, a lack of appreciation for the true situation leads him to distance himself from this ethnic community. But his attitudes towards cultural adaptation also leads to concerns among his English friends "*who kind of get really kind of, oh, you know, you should stick with your roots, you should make sure your kids speak Gujarati*". As well as frustration on his part:

*ethnicity is something they dip into from their liberal sort of standpoint, for them it makes them feel good to think they have all these wonderful cultures in their midst and they can nip down to Brixton and get the 'Caribbean experience' and Southall have the 'Indian experience' and have the 'authentic Indian' food. Most people who come here, their*

*backgrounds, they came here as kind of migrants, they came as migrants from very poor backgrounds. In my experience, through books of the immigrant communities, is that eventually they assimilate just to improve their chances of work*

His frustration stems from what he perceives to be his friends' promotion of white English culture over those of others, which enables them to gain self-esteem from their perceived 'support' of 'minority' cultures, while they in reality treat these experiences as novelties: like some form of living museum dedicated to a less advanced, ancient world. He also senses a rationalisation of white English culture by his friends, such that a wish to adopt white English ways is considered a natural choice for people from ethnic minority groups (once the irrational nature of their cultures are presented by comparison). White English people therefore feel it important that they draw the attention of people from ethnic minority groups, such as himself, to the value of their own cultures, without recognising that the institutional racism inherent in British society ensures that the choice to maintain such cultures, in any public manner, will be at (at least) severe economic cost. Not surprisingly, LN117 describes this attitude as "*very, very patronising*".

LN117 recognises the disjuncture between his perception of his ethnicity as grounded in his upbringing, and both the potential malleability of such foundations and the irrelevance that such lifestyles and histories have on his life (such that his "*experience*" of "*immigrant communities*" comes from "*books*") beyond the experiences of racist violence which continue to afflict him: both in themselves and in the way he reacts to other incidents which confront him. These reactions includes his recognition of the defining influence of skin colour in an appreciation of 'ethnic background' and his frustration at the simplistic and patronising treatment of people from less powerful 'ethnic groups' by those more powerful. While being brought up in a relatively traditional ethnic/religious environment, his appreciation of this ethnicity, including through his experiences of racist bullying as a child, were reflected on in the light of his positive childhood interethnic relationships and also the messages he received from his same-ethnic friendships in his local neighbourhood and in the Mosque, which he considered unsophisticated and also purposefully distracting in terms of developing a realistic appreciation of the nature of interethnic interaction in Britain in the 1970s through to the present. While he recognises that the problems of institutional (and interpersonal) racial discrimination remain, and that interethnic social networks can be limited in effectiveness which demands engagement with members of a similarly stigmatised community as a means of coping with this disadvantage, he also maintains his belief that the ethnic community is not an effective arena for overcoming it.

His 'traditional' upbringing, his heritage and his experiences of discrimination make him 'Indian', but he does not consider this a useful label or one which he would engage with



(outside of his family) given the option. While older members of ethnic minority communities may find use in such nostalgic ties, then, he is not concerned at their passing. The only important operationalisation of his 'ethnicity' is as a motivation for experiences of discrimination.

### LN113

LN113 was 27 years of age at the time of her interview. She is a single mother and was born in Britain. At the quantitative interview she classified herself as 'Indian', but when she was asked about her 'ethnicity' during the qualitative interview she responded:

*I'm mixed race because my dad is Indian, my mum is English, so if anyone ever asks me I always say 'I'm mixed race' but we refer to ourselves as 'Anglo-Indian' or, I mean on looks-wise, people would say that I'm 'Indian', so if I have to tick a box I'm 'Asian'...More so because when you come into job opportunities and stuff like that, that's what they're doing it on, they're not doing it on, 'oh, she's mixed race', they're doing it on, you know, what you look like*

This response gives a clear indication of the way in which multiple labels may be considered applicable at any one time. She uses the phrase 'mixed race' because she feels it has meaning to those who might ask, although she personally prefers to consider herself 'Anglo-Indian' which can recognise the joint influences on her self-concept rather than simply being an amalgamation of several undefined cultures. She also comments on the way people consider her to be 'Indian', and that forms tend to be insufficiently precise, offering nothing more meaningful to her ethnic appreciation than 'Asian'. This description highlights the potential contradictions between the way an individual's 'ethnicity' may be labelled by others and that which they may choose for themselves. She also recognises that people make efforts to draw her into their own ethnic community: the label 'Indian' applied to her more frequently by 'Indian people', others using more varied terms.

*Indian people usually say, 'oh, you're Indian', other people say 'Spanish', 'Greek' or whatever, but I just say, 'well, a mixture of two cultures, my mum is English, my dad Indian'*

She comments that she has never experienced any form of racist victimisation, but she is aware that there is a "lack of ethnic minorities working within the workplace which you tend to notice as being part of an ethnic minority". But she still feels pressure to conform to people's assumptions about who she is and what that means. So, the assumptions made by people about her ethnic background means that people expect her to have particular skills, in terms of language, for example. Her concern at not being able to fulfil these expectations caused her

*"difficulties" when she was younger, something that it took her "a few years to get my head round... because... [of the] difference" in the way she was brought up compared to other 'Indian' people. To avoid these difficulties, she is determined that her son will develop skills which could be used to identify him as 'Indian', should he (feel the) need to use them as well as recognising the other cultural influences on his life.*

*a difficulty I came across when I was younger ...I personally look Indian, well, a lot of people see me as being Indian, I found that...going to college there's an awful lot of Indian people there and like, you know, they were predominantly my friends but I don't speak the language and I really, you know, emphasised it to my dad that I want Nico to learn Hindi and to learn to speak it because I think it's an important part of the way he is seen by people that he has to learn all about those things*

But rather than these concerns suggesting she feels she is lacking in cultural heritage, she also considers having mixed ethnic parentage as providing an opportunity to engage with different cultures which will, in the longer term, provides more benefits than not.

*I'm very careful with my son to let him know everything, that's why [despite the separation] he's still involved with his father's family [who are 'West Indian'] because ... they again have a different culture so, you know, he has the opportunity to learn about everything and then make up his own mind which I think, well, nowadays in this country there's so much mixed marriages and so many different cultures living here that it will probably open more doors for him in the end.*

While LN113 has a clear recognition of her ethnic background, and how she would wish to define it, she is repeatedly required to reassess and justify what that means. The lack of appropriate options on forms means she is required to discard part, or indeed – in the use of 'mixed race' – all, of her heritage rather than being empowered to subscribe sufficient import to the various facets of her perceived ethnic identity. Beyond this, she also feels responsible for behaving in a way which supports the assumptions made by others about her. And feels guilty that she is unable to fulfil the expectations of members of the Indian community who would have her as one of their own. Being justified in considering yourself in any way 'Indian', then, requires the adoption of certain cultural markers for it to be properly justified.

## Conclusions

It is difficult to interpret these attitudes in terms of the importance of ethnic identity in the lives of these respondents. It could be argued that because interviewers were trained to ask about respondents' own definitions of their ethnicity but not to probe overly, these data should provide a more realistic impression of the importance of ethnicity in people's lives than situations where respondents have been questioned repeatedly, if necessary, regarding their ethnic affiliation, which may produce an unrealistic impression of the salience of ethnicity in people's lives. Indeed, twelve of the respondents mentioned ethnicity or race issues before they had been brought up by the interviewer – several respondents even providing information which was considered, by the interviewers, sufficient for the purposes of the data collection and not requiring further probing. None of these respondents had white British heritage, although some classified themselves as 'English'. Interestingly, these included respondents who later exhibited frustration as being asked to classify themselves as a member of an ethnic group: suggesting, perhaps, that the salience of their ethnicity was a consequence of the treatment of ethnic minority groups by wider society or being a member of a particular ethnic community; rather than some aspect of an individual's independently-formed self awareness which more formal assessments of 'ethnicity' explore. There were others, however, whose understanding of the phrase 'ethnic background' did not correspond to that of many researchers requiring further prompting (often with the use of particular ethnic labels) before offering any response.

Interestingly, despite being quite clear in their understanding of what 'ethnicity' is, or might be, in a more abstract sense (as discussed in the previous chapter), respondents were often less able, or willing, to be definitive in the application of ethnic labels to themselves. So this lack of probing may enable us to register people's unhappiness about being forced to adopt an ethnic label: which might occur either because other aspects of their identity were considered more salient; or because the labelling options considered available were incompatible with their own sense of their ethnicity. A more nuanced and sophisticated understanding of ethnicity was engendered in response to the need to negotiate conflicting criteria: motivated by either different identifiers considered more internally-driven or by the incompatibility between personal opinions and those of external forces – including those in what might be considered your 'own' ethnic community and those outside it. In this way people's ideas of who they are shifted, by historical, geographical, psychological and social location.

While many of the discussions suggested a positive role for membership of an ethnically-specific community, they also suggested that, for particularly Asian groups, it is the ethnic community which defines your membership and expects you to conform to its expectations rather than this membership being motivated purely by personal desire. Membership of an ethnic community may not be as malleable as previously assumed: bearing in mind BM14's

comments suggesting that considerations of your ethnicity and ethnic community should override those of class, such that Black people who wished to associate with white “snobs”, rather than supporting Black people, were considered traitors. Being a member of certain ethnic communities would seem to sometimes require more sacrifice and proscription than membership of others and this may explain why shifts in the meaning of particular ethnic identities and the use of more ‘radical’ ethnic labels might seem more problematic for some members of some ethnic groups than others. Importantly, it would also appear that, for some, membership of an ethnic community may (like LA17’s Afro hairstyle) be an aspect of ethnic identification (I am Indian because I am considered part of the Indian community) rather than a response to it (I am part of the Indian community because I am Indian). And therefore in some senses an external - if within-group - classification.

An issue which comes through clearly throughout these discussions, then, relates to the opportunities respondents felt afforded in terms of choosing to which ethnic group they were personally affiliated. While people with Irish heritage who consider themselves ‘English’ may mention their Irish heritage to distance themselves from the xenophobia some recognised among English people; it may also be a consequence of not considering themselves, or being considered, truly ‘English’. Other (non-white) people reported that they felt ‘British’ but were not accepted as such by British people. A British affiliation was therefore not one of the opportunities for ethnic classification open to them. The extent to which the choice of ethnic label is restricted by the external audience seems to be related to the presence (or absence) of characteristics which are considered to visibly (or audibly) link an individual with a particular ethnic group, or separate them from another. As a consequence, ‘Irish’ people, particularly those without accents, appear more able to (choose to) use ‘British’ or ‘English’ ethnic labels, and also to shift between them, LN120 saying: *“I’m more Irish than English. I would, you know, as a teenager I’d have said definitely the other way around so you do change.”* People also reported not being accepted as being ‘Caribbean’ in the Caribbean: although it was not clear whether this attitude was engendered entirely in response to perceived experiences (during visits to the Caribbean, for example) or whether this was related to more subjective opinions formed in Britain, as a consequence of a perceived ‘loss’ of Caribbean culture. It is also possible that these arguments were developed to counter arguments from the white British majority, or others in their ethnic community, about their not being ‘British’. The influence of others in your reflections on your self are also apparent in discussions of other forms of ethnic labelling: people labelling themselves as “mixed” ethnicity to “save arguments”, for example; others feeling pressurised to justifying their choice of ethnic label using explanations based on their place of birth. These discussions also show clearly the impact of experiences of racist victimisation on the appreciation of the meaning of ‘ethnicity’, the opportunity and need for an

ethnically-specific community, and the interethnic commonalities in the experiences of disadvantage and exclusion.

The six biographies have provided further detail regarding the way in which an ethnic identification may develop. They describe a number of criteria which might be employed for the allocation of ethnic labels, or an appreciation of groupness, the multiplicity of labels which might be used at any one, or at different, times and also ways in which these labels might be considered limited: including the frustration which develops from the enforced use of any form of ethnic identifier when it is considered of limited importance in any particular context. Importantly, they present some of the ways in which these criteria interrelate and may supersede one another. Following the pattern of the previous chapters, there appears a clear division between a more abstract appreciation of the manifestation of ethnicity and the ways in which ethnicity forms a meaningful aspect of an individual's life experience and, as a consequence, self-concept. People may determine their 'ethnicity' and appropriate explanatory labels according to their country of birth, heritage and upbringing and the way in which their lives conform to a recognised ethnically-specific lifestyle. These biographies have shown how these considerations may be contradictory, how recognised cultures and lifestyles can be constructed (in response to an ethnic other) and adapted to suit particular needs, and how an ethnic identification based on certain behaviours may be motivated more by expectation than intuition.

Even in reference to the more abstract concepts described in chapter 4, they have shown how access to labels is restricted by an external audience: different labels being accepted in different contexts; place of birth or citizenship considerations accorded more weight for some than for others, depending on their skin colour. And the way that an own-ethnic community can encourage the continuation of particular 'cultural' habits: through religious proscriptions or the fear of the 'Asian' community, for example. The biographies have shown how despite a recognition of the more abstract manifestations of ethnic identification, for many 'ethnicity' has little meaning beyond their experiences of victimisation in Britain and (physical and psychological) responses to that. The relationship between your 'ethnicity' and your 'environment' is complex, shifting and individually specific. While for some this encourages a sense of a need for an own-ethnic-community response, others recognise the limited value of such action. None of the discussions seem to contain a sense of a means with which to end this victimisation, rather than reducing some of its consequences. For no other reason, people feel condemned to remain forever 'ethnic'. This attitude is encouraged by the repeated use of measures which not only fail to offer sufficiently precise options to be meaningful even according to more abstract criteria, but which cannot begin to engage with the complexities and particularities of an individual's relationship with their ethnicity: particularly the way ethnicity

is less about 'culture' and more about expectation and commonalities in the experience of disadvantage.

## **Chapter 6      Integration of the quantitative and qualitative findings**

The quantitative findings from the separate ethnic group models suggest that ethnicity is important to people from different ethnic groups in England. They determined three broad components of ethnicity: related to attitudes towards cultural integration (or enculturation and cultural assimilation), racialisation and community participation. And they suggested that there are important similarities in the construction of ‘ethnicity’ across ethnic groups (defined according to geographical heritage and skin colour), but also important differences between members of the same ethnic group. The qualitative findings have found evidence for the influence of multiple criteria on ethnic categorisation, such that the more formal bureaucratic assessments of ethnicity employed appear overly simplistic and at best unhelpful. They have suggested that formal and informal relationships may be key to the transmission of ethnic awareness and frustration at this position, in part, produces a sense of the meaningless nature of ‘ethnicity’, at least in the manifestations offered by the powerful. This powerful group, however, seem able to continue to ignore their culture, and impending cultural crisis – at least while responding to a qualitative interview. In this chapter, I will explore how the quantitative and qualitative findings may combine to enhance our understanding of ethnicity and ethnic affiliation, before exploring how these findings can contribute to and expand on the existing literature.

### **Attitudes towards cultural integration**

In the quantitative ethnic minority group models this dimension of ethnic identity formed two components: Component 1, enculturation, exploring the ‘promotion’ (or preservation) of ethnic difference through (continued) adherence to beliefs and practices which could be seen to be traditional to an ethnic group, and Component 4, exploring feelings about and attitudes towards assimilation towards the culture of the ethnic majority in Britain. Conclusions drawn from the quantitative analyses suggested that this aspect of ethnic identification could both provide an internal sense of identity which operates independently of the attitudes of ‘others’ and may involve the presentation of a public image to an audience. These conclusions are supported by the qualitative data in a number of ways. People talked about the importance of their upbringing (which was often related to their place of birth and ancestry) on their lifestyle and core beliefs, and the importance of these considerations in their identification of their ethnic affiliations: in what felt “*comfortable*” to them.

As would be suggested from the principal component analyses, the qualitative analyses suggested that variations in the extent to which these ‘traditional’ attitudes and customs were maintained affected people’s perceptions of their ethnic identity: Black Caribbean people labelling themselves as (Black) British or English and Indian people labelling themselves as ‘Asian’, or in more Anglified terms as such participation dwindled. Such shifts also seemed to

be associated with shifts in people's attitudes towards who would be included in their ethnic community, and therefore who else might be included in their ethnic group. More than this, people felt that there were innate differences between members of different ethnic groups. People were believed to instinctively behave in particular ways. Even without any recourse to discussions of behaviours, people described their inherent, and unavoidable, genetic or natural links to an ethnic group, sometimes referred to as the influence of 'blood'. There was a sense that these innate similarities meant it was simply 'normal' for people to mix only with people from their own ethnic group – even when the differences between different ethnic groups was not considered sufficient to produce actual incompatibilities.

The qualitative discussions also addressed the impact of acculturation. People talked about the effect of their current 'environment', and length of residence was emphasised in discussions of ethnic identity as a motivation behind perceived label shifts. People discussed, more explicitly, how customs had adapted as a consequence of moving to and living in Britain, until it appeared possible that these customs may not even be recognised in their 'homeland'. Indeed there was evidence to suggest that some of these customs may not have found expression outside Britain. It was also recognised that people could adopt certain behaviours related to their new environment in Britain, while maintaining the ultimate significance (and personal relevance) of their ethnic (minority) affiliation. For some, then, the meaning of a label (in terms of attitudes and lifestyle) could shift while the label remained the same. For others, shifts in meaning were considered justification for the adoption of other (on the whole, more 'Anglified') labels.

That these customs may be in some way post-migration specific, would support a suggestion that differences within this dimension may also involve some internalisation of external (both ethnic majority and minority) attitudes or are motivated by the emphasising of your ethnic identity by others. People talked about adopting cultural signifiers (such as hair styles) as a consequence of a shift in attitudes towards the significance of your ethnic identity. And the importance of using customs to present an ethnicity to the outside world. People also expressed regret at their inability to fulfil other people's expectations of them as a member of a particular cultural group – in terms of language use, for example. Others talked about experiences of racism engendering a sense of cross-ethnic unity. So, skin colour was also considered to be an important aspect of your 'ethnicity', but operated differently to the influence of 'blood' and other innate characteristics, described above: 'blood' being a basis for inclusive groups, skin colour being a basis for exclusion.

Religious customs were an important means for presenting a 'traditional' 'ethnicity' to the outside world, and a religious education was considered, by some, crucial for inter-generational



cultural transference. Religion also appears able to provide a historical legitimacy to ethnically-specific customs, preventing them from being as easily manipulated or adapted as customs less well supported. Some people even felt that the application of an ethnic label was unimportant, as only their religious identity held meaning in their lives, although this work also suggests that this separation is artificial. This considered irrelevance of ethnicity to those with strong religious attachment might also go some way towards explaining why the 'ethnic' labels employed by these groups were more 'radical' than those who appeared more secular: a reliance on religious identification perhaps resolving the conflicts associated with the influence of a 'British' lifestyle on a 'traditional' ethnicity – either personally or for other members of 'your' 'group'.

In terms of the impact of being a member of a minority cultural group on ethnic affiliation (component 4 from the quantitative analyses), qualitatively, some people from ethnic minority groups felt loyalty both to their 'homeland' and to Britain. Others, particularly those with more 'Anglified' labels, felt that this 'homeland' held no salience for them personally. One of the opportunities associated with living in Britain voiced was related to meeting with and learning from other cultural groups, although people also felt that these opportunities were sometimes lost as a consequence of attitudes which caused people from ethnic minority groups in inter-ethnic relationships – particularly those with white people – to be more aware of their 'minority' status than those who were not. People also had concerns about mixing with other people who might exhibit bad behaviour, in itself and in terms of the consequences should such behaviour be adopted by people in their 'own' ethnic group. Such cross-generational cultural and behavioural shifts were identified, particularly by people from South Asian groups, as a problematic 'generation gap', where young people were increasingly rejecting what were considered to be the cultural mores of the community. Interestingly, this appeared less of an issue for Black Caribbean or Irish people, perhaps because the culturally-specific lifestyles of these groups were considered more related to attitudes than behaviours, and because the 'differences' between the cultures of Irish, Black and white British people were considered (by Black, Irish and to an extent South Asian groups) to be less extreme than that between South Asian and 'white' groups. White British (and other) groups felt that ethnic minority (particularly South Asian, owing to this perceived more extreme 'cultural difference') groups had a responsibility to adapt and integrate, even to the extent that there was a sense that those that did not should *expect* to be victims of racial harassment.

That these dimensions of ethnic identity formed only one component for the white British group may be a consequence, as suggested earlier, of the reduced 'opportunity' to participate in what could be considered ethnically-specific behaviours among this group. More likely, though, given the qualitative discussions, is that white British people do not recognise their culturally-specific habits. The power to normalise these behaviours and attitudes also prevented any sense

of this 'culture' being threatened. Related to this was the frustration voiced by people from ethnic minority groups that they were treated as a cultural curiosity by members of the white majority. This related to the impression voiced by white British respondents that only ethnic minority group members have 'ethnicity'.

### **Community participation**

Partly in response to the attitudes of white British people and concerns about the effect of the bad behaviour of other ethnic groups on their own, preference for participating in ethnically-specific communities was expressed by ethnic minority groups in the qualitative interviews, and a number of respondents described the work they did for, or within, 'their community'. Although residence in Britain meant that, for some, the groups constituting this ethnic network had shifted: perhaps incorporating other ethnic groups into an 'Asian' or a 'Muslim' identity, for example; although people still residing in the 'homeland' remained, for some, important members of this ethnic community. Again, the extent to which people considered themselves to participate in an ethnic community appeared to affect their application of particular ethnic labels: a clear indication of the effect of community participation on personal ethnic identification. People also perceived a need to maintain ethnically-specific networks in order to reduce the risks and provide support in the face of direct racial harassment, or to overcome to limited opportunities afforded to people from ethnic minority groups as a consequence of indirect or institutional racial discrimination – in the education system or workplace for example – and also to overcome the apathy and lack of confidence which these experiences had produced.

Other people felt that their community had particular problems, different to those of other ethnically-specific communities, which required an ethnically-specific response. As mentioned above, people also felt that it was 'normal' to maintain same-ethnic networks: because biological and cultural influences meant that there were fundamental differences between people from different ethnic groups which meant (for some) that they could not operate successfully as one community; for others, that they had different attitudes – particularly that white British people were less supportive and innately xenophobic. Further, people, from the different South Asian communities particularly, felt that only people from their own ethnic group behaved appropriately, unlike (particularly) white or English people. This was also closely related to the discussions of the operation of the 'Asian' 'community', where people's actions were closely scrutinised by an informal and, in some senses, imaginary authority whose negative reaction was believed to produce considerable disadvantage, largely in the form of humiliation in, and perceived ostracising from, the community. Fear of such retribution seemed sufficient for people, particularly in the older generation, to go to great lengths to avoid risking such reaction: to the extent that none of the respondents discussed direct experience of such

humiliation (etc) except in as far as people felt they had provoked such damning responses. Actual examples of the direct reaction of this 'community' were therefore unforthcoming, such that some younger respondents despaired of the beholden attitude of the older generation.

While not recognised only by those with a strong religious affiliation, the 'Asian community' had strong ties to the various religious communities it serves. But there was also a sense of impending crisis in these more authoritarian religions, and therefore for their current methods of promoting 'ethnic' identification and groupness. Several respondents described the difficulties they faced in encouraging their children (and others) to maintain their religiously-specified habits, while others expressed disillusion with the religion with which they had been brought up. This appears to be a consequence of the perceived mismatch between the basic religious teachings and the customs and attitudes promoted as 'religious' as well as an incompatibility between lifestyles in Britain and strict and immalleable religious demands. While the maintenance of strict religious doctrine might for now continue to encourage adherence to cultural traditions; failing to adapt to the changing circumstances and lifestyles of their members might produce problems for the perceived integrity of some religions, and the ethnic communities they support, in the future.

The qualitative discussions suggest that involvement in a same-ethnic community is, for some, 'unreflexive', and related simply to what is considered the 'natural' or 'normal' behaviour of members of a particular ethnic group. For others this organisation was more politicised, related to the need to organise in response to external oppression, and to promote a positive identity to counteract negative stereotypes. The discussions of the 'Asian community' and also of the Black community suggest that this community integration may be less straightforward, however, and that there may be an extent to which people feel *obliged* to operate as a member of a particular group. So while this may be motivated by the threat of negative treatment by other external groups, it may also be that the individual is drawn into an ethnic community by the other members of that community – a form of 'internal other' – rather than by the individual themselves: for whom this ethnic integration may not be an entirely positive experience, but one which is associated with strong proscription ensured by a fear of being stigmatised by their own community.

### **Being a member of a racialised group**

In the qualitative interviews, respondents reported being initially too naïve to recognise their experiences of racism; recognition which came with increased experience and greater awareness – with age, increased length of residence, education, employment or through other people's experiences of racism being reported on television.

The influence of the reactions of others has been mentioned in a number of places in this chapter – including the recognition of the role of skin colour in ethnic definitions, the desire to adopt particular cultural signifiers to fulfil other people's expectations of you and the way that experiences and perceptions of racism engendered a sense of unity, or need for defensive organisation – either with people from other ethnic (minority) groups, as a form of 'Blackness' or 'ethnic minority' identity, as described above, or in a particular ethnic community. South Asian respondents and respondents with 'mixed' ethnic heritage described themselves as being 'Black', and described the influence of their 'colour', in recognition of their experiences of racist treatment. Some respondents expressed dissatisfaction at even being asked to identify with a particular ethnic group, feeling that this in itself promoted exclusionist tendencies. People from lower social classes, particularly, voiced frustration at the power people from white British groups held over their ability to label themselves as they wished, feeling themselves to remain forever 'ethnic'.

Discussions of people's choice of ethnic label also referred to the impact of external attitudes. Sometimes, respondents attempted to understand the motivation for the question (on a form, for example) and tried to give a response which took account of researcher expectations: concluding that people wish to know 'what you look like' or 'what your origins are', for example. In this way, some people's choices of appropriate label were more a consequence of the categories provided on a form than any internally defined ethnicity. People also described at length how people's reactions to you prevented you classifying yourself as you would wish. People felt themselves to be British, for example, holding a British passport, speaking English, being born and growing up in Britain and having a British lifestyle; but they felt they would never be accepted as such, even when they were equally not accepted as being, for example, 'Caribbean' in the Caribbean. People therefore felt that they were forced to use ethnic labels which had no meaning to them. People from white minority groups seemed not to experience the same restrictions, however, but only when they were not recognisable, or 'visible', in other ways, such as by their accent. Experiences of racism and reactions to your skin colour or other aspects of your identity could, then – for the labellers and the labelled – override other considerations in processes of ethnic identification.

It is also clear that people go to some lengths to persuade themselves that their experiences, and social position, are not a consequence of the racist tendencies of powerful groups. The 'natural' differences considered to exist between people from different ethnic groups were used to explain how (white) people, particularly service providers, were unable to understand people from other ethnic groups: an issue which was exacerbated by class differences, which were considered to place white people in the middle classes and "*ordinary*" people from ethnic minority groups in the working classes. It was argued that not all white people were racist, that people from all/other groups were, and that racism often came from ignorance and jealousy. People described efforts to explain away their experiences and others seemed to internalise their experiences: feeling themselves in some way responsible for their treatment. People also described problems in recognising their experiences of racism, as a consequence of new more-subtle, "*covert*" or "*hidden*" methods which racists employed. And the perceived lack of acceptance of white people and the authorities set up to protect victims regarding the racist motivation behind their experiences. People felt unsupported, and unable to act to prevent or even respond to their negative treatment.

People had resigned themselves to a life of repeated victimisation, and it was recognised that this was the fate of every person considered of ethnic minority (or non-white) status in Britain. As well as being a member of a particular ethnic group, then, they were also a member of a (broader) group which was victimised by racism. These findings support both the widespread nature and the considerable impact of the racialised experience on aspects of the process of ethnic identification among people identified as being members of (particularly, but not exclusively, non-white) ethnic minority groups in Britain. So while people from certain ethnic groups may be considered by their members to be naturally different: experiences of racism enabled a sense of cross-ethnic victimised or racialised identity. Interestingly, however, this awareness did not appear to lead to a sense of a politicised ethnic awareness. In general, people felt they could do little other than to accept that they would continue to be the victims of racism or try to avoid potentially threatening interactions. It could be argued that by suggesting that racist attitudes are held and acted on by only a minority of individuals, and that many of these are jealous rather than racist, the perceived need for political action is minimised. Indeed, people argued that this interpersonal racism was less upsetting than institutional racism; treating them as distinct rather than recognising a relationship between them. Widespread distrust of every British institution – public and private – was frequently described. But the considered response was to employ representatives from ethnic minority groups, rather than to organise for political change. So people who labelled themselves as being of 'Asian', 'Black' or 'mixed' ethnicity also talked about being 'Black', in terms of being a victim of racial harassment and discrimination: although the recognition of this mutual experience was insufficient to engender an awareness that this may be a basis for more broadly organised action. LN117 discussed how

a (same-ethnic) 'friendship' requires more than just common experiences of racist harassment, suggesting that perceived boundaries between groups may, at least for the time being, be perceived as being too rigid and unassailable to enable inter-ethnic organisation. Even (on the one occasion) where a respondent was aware of the need to organise to overcome this disadvantage, his responses did not appear to recognise options with which to attempt to reduce the sources of that oppression. For some, even considering yourself a member of an ethnic group was felt to be unhelpful in terms of addressing the disadvantage experienced by people from ethnic minority groups. The political nature of such labelling was therefore a reason to avoid it.

### **Similarities and differences**

As with the quantitative findings, the qualitative findings suggest important similarities, but also differences, in the processes of ethnic identification. There were people who understood the concept of 'ethnicity', while there were others who did not and required further prompting before they were able to 'allocate' themselves to a particular group. For some, particularly, but not exclusively, those classified as 'white British' and those who consider themselves 'Muslim', ethnicity was a meaningless consideration. Alternatively, there was a suggestion of a conflation of ethnic and national or religious identity, such that this apparent lack of understanding may be related more to the terminology than to the concept: asking about 'culture' producing different responses to questions exploring 'ethnic background'. In each ethnic group, with the exception of those classified as 'white British', there were some who felt that their ethnicity played a role in their lives, while others did not: some even exhibiting frustration at the interviewer's persistence in questioning them about an issue which held no salience for them (other than in reference to these questions). So, there was ethnic variation in the importance with which ethnic group membership was considered. Some people classified as 'white British' considered 'ethnicity' only something which people from non-white groups had, while several people classified as being members of ethnic minority groups made reference to aspects of 'ethnicity' before it was explored by the interviewer.

People recognised that there were people affiliated to a number of different ethnic groups living in Britain, and many felt positively about the opportunities for meeting and learning from people considered members of these other groups. Discussions of 'ethnicity' often involved considerations of genetic influence or forms of 'innate' ethnicity, and descriptions of how 'your' ethnic group naturally or culturally varied from those around it. Discussions of these relational aspects of 'ethnicity' involved showing 'your' ethnic group in a positive light: in terms of successful competition, superior climate, positive behaviours or not being racist. Although less obviously positive, common experience of being a victim of racism was also important for the group identification of people from white and non-white groups. The discussions of their 'own'

ethnic affiliation by white British people were usually brief – indication of the perceived unimportant and uncontested nature of this identity for these respondents. And unlike people from other ethnic groups, ‘white British’ people did not mention their relationships with people from other ethnic groups in their self-definition. While people with Irish ancestry mentioned experiences of racism more frequently than people from ‘white British’ groups, these experiences referred to hearing ‘jokes’ or ‘derogatory’ statements which appeared less extreme than the repeated and sometimes violent experiences described by people from non-white groups. Also perhaps telling was the way in which ‘Irish’ people’s reports of racist experiences had enabled them to ‘identify’ with people from non-white groups – both in the sense that they are all victims but also that the experiences of non-white groups are likely to be more serious. That ‘Irish’ people appeared to feel more able to act to influence these encounters than those from other victimised groups may also suggest an improved sense of empowerment among this compared with other victimised groups.

These perceived within-group similarities also lead to a desire, among people who identified with a particular ethnic minority group, to have social spaces which they may consider their own, even on a temporary basis. Strong religious affiliation provides opportunities for the strengthening of a sense of internal attachment to an ‘ethnic’ group and is an important means for establishing an ‘ethnic’ community, as well as ensuring the appropriate behaviour of its members. But a place of worship can also play an important role in providing a space within which to express ethnic affiliation, particularly in a society where the majority culture is considered to have lifestyles and attitudes widely differing from those of ‘your own’ group, and particularly where those lifestyles are considered immoral. The need for a ‘cleansed’ environment for the Islamic community (as encountered by LN65) enables a claim to an ‘ethnically’-specified space – a social “*home*” where you may be free from exoticisation; discarding the lifestyles adopted in interaction with the outside world. That these forms of ethnic identification might be considered “*pure*” may also make important comment on attitudes towards those who might be considered to have undergone some degree of ‘cultural adaptation’.

There was a widespread recognition that ethnicity could be defined in a number of ways: according to your place of birth, ancestry, migration characteristics, length of residence in Britain, citizenship, language use, ‘upbringing’, ‘lifestyle’, involvement with the (more specific or more general) ethnic community and links with a ‘homeland’, as well as in terms of the responses of others to you. There was also a recognition that the labels used to identify yourself varied according to which of these defining characteristics were employed. But the extent to which each of these were considered varied according to ethnic affiliation. ‘White British’ respondents seemed more likely to rely on ideas of nationality, religion, skin colour and,

particularly, place of birth: showing less consideration for the more nuanced understandings allowing for the lived experience of being a member of a particular ethnic group described by people from other groups. The less subtle and static appreciation of 'ethnicity' of white British respondents provoked frustration among people from other groups and may be motivated by the lack of variation in, or relevance of, many of these criteria used in defining 'white British' people. Their place of birth, nationality, ancestry, citizenship, skin colour, upbringing and lifestyle, for example, not likely to contradict one another. Length of residence and migration characteristics would, usually, be meaningless for the ethnic considerations of members of this group.

Their position as members of a dominant national group means that concerns about the reactions of others are less likely to affect a sense of groupness for 'white British' people, compared with others. The awareness of cultural variation (usually brought by (ancestral) migration) is also somewhat lost on 'white British' people, in terms of their own personal or historical experience. As a consequence there is less recognition of how these different aspects could contradict one another compared with other respondents. More than this people considered 'white British' did not identify themselves with a particular 'culture', apart from in opposition to the 'irrational' behaviour of others: their culture was therefore normalised and rendered invisible, apart from to people from victimised groups who exhibited frustration at demands to behave in accordance with the "*white way*" of doing things. That people who identified themselves as 'white British' also perceived less need for an ethnic community is further evidence of the perceived lack of threat to their dominant position, which may in turn explain the lack of consideration of their 'ethnic' affiliation more generally. While 'Irish' people discussed an ethnic community, this was often in terms of access to what was considered a particular cultural/ethnic upbringing and/or related to the perceived biological or attitudinal differences between different 'ethnic' groups. While there was recognition of commonalities in the experiences of and possibilities for protection from the direct and indirect consequences of racism among this group, this role was less important than for those affiliated to non-white victimised groups.

There was widespread recognition that at any one time there were a number of labels which people could employ to define their ethnicity. Regardless of perceived affiliation, people described frustration at the criteria used on forms: particularly (among people classified as minority group members) that they were insufficiently specific to be meaningful. But the range of labels available seemed to vary by ethnic affiliation. Increased length of residence in Britain and 'mixed' Irish/English parentage enabled people to describe themselves as 'English', for example; while people with white and non-white parentage had recourse to more complicated and sometimes hyphenated, or 'mixed', labels. While 'white British' people were able to discuss



the meaninglessness of the descriptor 'white', people who described themselves as 'Black British' or 'Anglo Indian', for example, appeared to feel less able to remove their non-white signifier. Indeed, some respondents with 'mixed' ethnic parentage went to considerable lengths to justify their access even to these hybrid Anglified labels.

Importantly, though, there appeared to be differences between the non-white groups explored here, which plays on the perceived inherent differences between different 'ethnic' groups and, as argued above, may prevent any broader 'inter-ethnic' political action. Seen partly through the variations in scores on the particular components of ethnic identification found quantitatively, qualitative discussions suggested that people consider their ethnicities in different ways. While people classified as 'Black Caribbean' using the measures adopted in the HSE described themselves as having an inherent and unavoidable 'ethnicity', there was also an awareness that this was not sufficient justification for the victimisation which they recognised and felt they (as 'Black' people) commonly experienced – such that "*social workers*" and other white people could take account of these ethnic differences if they wished and prevent them from impacting on the lives of people from ethnic minority groups. In this way, 'Black' respondents exhibited an awareness of the importance of their relationship with the national group in Britain in their experience and appreciation of their ethnic identity. People who considered themselves in some way affiliated to (South) Asian groups, however, appeared more likely to consider their 'ethnicity' as existing in some form prior to migration (even if this had undergone some manipulation with life in Britain) and therefore of relevance beyond any perceived common experiences of victimisation. There was also a perception of an inherent moral superiority of 'Asian' people which produced a desire to retain specificity in their networks. To an extent, then, this 'Asian' identity might also be considered normalised, at least among those who recognise their south Asian heritage. Some (south) 'Asian' respondents did discuss their experiences of racism, and the confusion that this caused for their ethnic identification, but these discussions seemed less part of an expression of group identity in the way that the consistency of the discussions of the 'Black Caribbean' group would suggest. Even for these more racialised 'Asian' respondents, the persistence of their 'Asian' identity (encouraged by a strong 'Asian community' – even where they did not have personal involvement with it) seemed to provide a strength of self-awareness in the face of this negative experience and enabled any ethnic affiliation to be vocalised more positively. Unfortunately, the qualitative discussions also suggested potential ruptures in the foundations of this 'Asian community', however, and only time will tell whether this particular form of 'Asian' identity will continue to be so robust.

I believe that summarising the findings in this way enables an important synthesising of the different aspects of a huge and complex set of potentially disparate findings. I feel it displays clearly both the ways in which the quantitative and qualitative findings can reinforce each other,

and the additional information each can provide. The quantitative and qualitative findings each show the ways in which ethnic identification may be important and meaningful, and the influence of the recognition of a desire or need to maintain 'ethnic' specificity or allow for integration, the role of the 'ethnic' community and the impact of racialisation on ethnic awareness and classification. The quantitative data provides important detail regarding the great similarities in considerations of 'ethnicity' – that the general components addressed have some consistency even when their actuality might vary. The qualitative data present the ways in which individuals might argue that 'ethnicity' is as simplistic and straightforward as data collectors and the media (for example) would suggest, despite those arguments falling down in discussions of their appreciation of their own 'ethnic status'. And that while certain dimensions might still hold particular importance in assessments of 'ethnicity', these vary from those which are commonly discussed in more abstract ways. That these are far more about who other people think you are, than who you do. Further, the qualitative findings have shown how the importance of ethnicity as an aspect of who you consider yourself to be can shift, and why. And how the labels which define this ethnicity may shift, and why. And why some people might consider their ethnicity to be at the same time both meaningful, and not. How far each might occur is a consequence of power.

## **Chapter 7      Discussion and conclusions**

These findings have provided important insight into the various processes associated with ethnic identification. While the quantitative findings suggested, in support of other work (Jenkins 1994, 1997, Karlsen and Nazroo 2000a, 2002a), that ‘ethnicity’ may be defined in ways which allow for internal and external considerations; the qualitative findings provide considerable evidence for the overriding importance of external labelling, by both those external to your ‘ethnic group’, and those who might be considered to be within it. The qualitative discussions support the quantitative findings in the recognition of a number of what might be considered broad components of ‘ethnicity’: relating to enculturation or attitudes towards cultural integration, community participation, and the effect of racialisation. The quantitative findings have shown that these dimensions are meaningful to a large and nationally representative sample of people who might be considered members of different ethnic groups. An important contribution of the qualitative analyses is to show how these dimensions of identification are interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

A key finding from the quantitative findings is the similarity of the components across the different ‘ethnic groups’ classified using a measure based on geographical ancestry and skin colour, including those considered part of the ‘ethnic majority’ in Britain; although both sets of analyses show that the importance of particular aspects of this process varies, both within and between ‘groups’. The quantitative findings present variation in the potential meaning of aspects of the identification process between and within ‘ethnic’ groups, and according to other sociodemographic indicators, such as age, gender, educational level and socioeconomic and migration status, as has been described elsewhere (Phinney 1990): as a consequence of differences in the perceived meaning of particular components and their mapping onto aspects of an individual’s particular lived experience. The qualitative findings have provided a more subtle – though still consistent – image, showing the distinctions between the processes of ‘ethnic’ identification for those who (both within and between groups) might consider themselves more, or less, ‘British’. The qualitative findings have also enabled the filling of other gaps which were beyond the capabilities of the quantitative data – exploring the frustrations inherent in ‘ethnic’ labelling for some individuals and the way in which research investigation or ethnic monitoring can compound the effects of external labelling: such that research itself can be considered to create ‘ethnicity’, on both an individual and more general level. In this chapter, I shall explore these findings in light of the existing literature.

### **The negotiation of the use of ‘appropriate’ ethnic labels**

The qualitative findings, in particular, highlight the impact of considerations of categorical relevance in any process of self definition. Although it has been considered the “most symbolically potent form” of identification (Modood *et al* 1994:81), this aspect of the process of identification has often not been recognised, or at least discussed, in work exploring these processes (Ashmore *et al* 2004). Failing to explore the perceived personal relevance of concepts of ‘ethnicity’ ignores the potential disjuncture between the application of an ‘ethnic’ label and the extent to which this corresponds to a lived experience. This position would appear to find motivation in theories which ignore the influence of external forces in ‘ethnic’ and other forms of social definition, and I fear they run the risk of ignoring the most crucial aspects of ‘ethnicity’: its fluid and contingent nature and the influence of external demands for self-categorisation. Indeed, these findings suggest that while people may recognise that they could be categorised using a particular ethnic label, and even that this categorisation might affect their social experience, they may be unhappy about being labelled in this way and feel this ethnic ascription to be otherwise unimportant to the way they live their lives, either in general or in isolation from the mutual influences of other aspects of their character, such as age, gender or occupation (Mahtani 2002). Moreover, respondents considered other aspects of their character to be of overriding importance – such that emphasising their ‘ethnic’ status distorted their sense of self (Back 1996). So, people did not necessarily identify with the categorisation with which they became associated, nor wished to. Some respondents, here and elsewhere (Modood *et al* 1994), were frustrated at being treated as an ‘ethnic minority’ person, when this identity held no meaning to them except in relation to the negative treatment often associated with such labelling, or as a respondent in a survey.

For some this frustration was due to their awareness of the ‘lateral’ (Handelman 1977) relationship between different aspects of their character in their self-concept, such that privileging their ‘ethnicity’ was considered misleading (Back 1996, Mahtani 2002). Others recognised problems related to the particular labels imposed which were unable to engage with their own lived experience of their ethnicity (its effects on socioeconomic status or residential area, for example): respondents assumed that researchers expected responses which conformed to the census-type (‘less radical’) categories used for ethnic monitoring and research purposes and disputed their relevance. Their ‘ethnicity’ might still form an important aspect of their identity, then, but in relation to other classificatory schema (Back 1996). Respondents perceived investigators to be unsophisticated in their appreciation of the various distinctions operating in processes of ‘ethnic’ labelling and therefore the potential multiplicity of meanings underlying them. In terms of the use of such crude measures for research, I am particularly concerned by the finding that people may seek to ‘please’ investigators by establishing an impression of the response ‘expected’ by the researcher to which respondents then conform, even when provided

with more flexible options for response. This may explain why some other studies have failed to appreciate the highly context-specific nature of 'ethnic' identification. Warikoo's (2005) in-depth interviews with Indo-Caribbean students in New York, USA, suggest that ethnic labels shift with context, particularly the ethnic (and age (Back 1996)) composition of the immediate social group. These findings suggest that the use of particular terminology shifts according to both the 'ethnicity' of the immediate social group and also in the context of the subject under discussion – in both cases employing the most-specific inclusive label (perceived to be) available. This suggests that respondents must contextualise their 'ethnicity' before they can provide a response regarding their ethnic affiliation (Back 1996, Modood 1997). The findings of this thesis suggest that, in research of this type, respondents often assume the 'bureaucratic form'-type mode and provide, at least initially, 'less radical' responses which would be meaningful to this schema. There is also evidence of the way in which these contexts structured people's own relationships with 'their' ethnicity. Importantly, some of Warikoo's respondents (with 'mixed' ethnic heritage) were able to adapt their publically-voiced ethnic attachment to exploit opportunities to adopt positions of power, in light of the characteristics of others within their social group. Unfortunately, the interactions in the interviews conducted as part of this thesis appear more often to produce discussions of dissatisfaction with the enforced use of meaningless labels and the adoption of strategies to overcome them, than opportunities for empowerment.

The application of an ethnic label is considered an important part of the process of group self-determinisation, sending an important signal to potential members and non-members about the identity of that group. It reflects internal and external group dynamics as well as particular context and fashion (Thornton *et al* 2000). Label choices are therefore able to provide insight into the important dimensions which are involved in the establishment of ethnic awareness, as well as who might be considered members of a common community (or not). Here, people proposed a number of labels which might be meaningful in a consideration of their ethnic identity. In keeping with the Self-Categorisation Theory from social psychology (Turner *et al* 1987), the labels chosen differed in their degree of abstraction and inclusiveness. That each label considered was in a sense 'globally' meaningful (to members of that group and to others) further supports an argument that some form of pre-categorisation is likely to have been involved in the decision regarding appropriate label use (Verkuyten 1997). Adopting a label requires an appreciation of the meaning of that label. Establishing the meaning of these categories, as described above, also entails a process of negotiation with numerous interested parties – the outcome of which is again contingent on the distribution of power.

There was also evidence in these findings of variations in the acceptability and popularity of different labels, by individuals, cohorts and overtime (Modood *et al* 1994). One respondent with

Black Caribbean heritage, for example, felt he could “*never*” be called ‘Black’, supporting Thornton *et al*’s discussion of the unpopularity of the term among some people (in the US) due to its use by slave owners, and also perceptions of its associations with aggression and militancy: “as late as the 1960s to be called Black [in the US] was considered an insult” (2000:152). But again this is a response to the unequal distribution of power. Caribbean respondents to Modood *et al*’s (1994) study felt that there was little point in adding further descriptors to the term ‘Black’ as, like here (and voiced by respondents from different ethnic groups), “*to them it doesn't matter whether you're Pakistani, Indian or Mogadishu or whatever, if you're dark coloured then you're a 'Paki', you know?*”. This again highlights the frustration associated with the unsophisticated terminology often used in research, for bureaucratic monitoring and in wider (in this case British) society. Here and elsewhere (Modood *et al* 1994, Warikoo 2005), people also describe the frustration related to the attitudes of white British people towards ‘ethnic minority cultures’. As a consequence, people felt obliged to use geographically-generalised labels to describe themselves which could account for this crude awareness. Interestingly, though, this appears to affect different people in different ways: some able to refute or ignore such impositions, others less so. Reminiscent of Bourdieu’s conceptualisation of ‘capital’ in his theory of ‘habitus’ (1977), improved social position and higher education both appeared to provide individuals with the opportunity to adopt (a number of) alternative labels which affected the extent to which providing meaningful responses to questions of ‘ethnic background’ was considered a source of stress.

People, particularly those classified as ‘Black Caribbean’ and ‘Indian’, used a number of hybrid labels as part of a process clearly demarcated as “*describing myself*”, and often in contradiction to those labels which were described as being imposed on them. These included ‘Anglo-Indian’, ‘Black British’ or, more simply, ‘Asian’ or ‘Black’. This process could suggest the influence of cultural “translation”, where:

people retain links with their places of origin and their traditions, but they are without the illusion of a return to the past. They are obliged to come to terms with the new cultures they inhabit, without simply assimilating to them and losing their identities completely...they are irrevocably the product of several interlocking histories and cultures, belong at one and the same time to several ‘homes’ (and to no one particular home) (Hall 1992:310)

Less radical terms therefore become less meaningful. But while I believe there is some potential explanatory power in this concept in terms of these findings; I feel it also operates in a vacuum, suggesting an unrestricted and internally-driven trend towards cultural adaptation which falls short of fully appreciating the impact of powerful ‘others’. These respondents recognised the power they had with which to define themselves, but also the power of others over their

adoption of particular 'ethnic' labels. So while, for example, individual 'Indians' might prefer to adopt an alternative or hybrid label, the power of the 'Indian' community is sufficient for the labels of people from 'Indian' groups to remain less radical; even when other influences on label choice (such as attitudes and lifestyle) contradict such label use. Those more obviously 'different' to white British people described particular restriction in their opportunities to alter their ethnic definition as they would choose. Those who considered themselves 'Anglo-Indian', 'Black British' or 'Black' appeared to do so in recognition of their inability to completely discard the 'minority' aspect of their 'ethnicity', as a consequence of their exclusion (from the 'British' label and more generally) by the white British majority, despite their fulfilling many of the criteria (apparently) required for 'British' group membership.

The concept of translation also fails to recognise the varying and context-specific treatment of 'ethnicity' by individuals, such that it may be perceived as more or less 'traditional' in different contexts, suggesting the co-existence of both 'translated' and 'traditional' concepts of 'ethnicity' and the shortcomings of theories which cannot allow for this. So while these discussions suggested that the meaning and use of particular labels shifted by length of residence, gender, age and social class, they were also dependent on the particular aspect of 'ethnicity' under consideration at any particular time. So people might describe themselves differently, depending on whether they were describing the influence of their upbringing and lifestyle, their social relationships, their category (on a form) or their experiences of exclusion. The different aspects with which 'ethnicity' was considered produced conflicts for some respondents in their choice of 'ethnic' label. But responses to such conflicts also varied. Some respondents continued to maintain the ultimate significance of their 'less radical' labels: shifting the virtual meaning of their label while retaining the nominal aspect (Jenkins 1997). Others adopted a new label which recognised this change in substance. Some people from 'ethnic minority' groups described themselves as 'British' or 'English': although this was sometimes accompanied by discussion regarding their frustration about the gatekeeping around access to such labels. Others adopted hybrid labels, such as 'Anglo-Indian' or 'Asian', which recognised the multiple influences on their appreciation of their 'ethnicity', and also their perceived ability to participate, to some extent, in both ethnic arenas.

The use of the phrase 'Black British' seems to have increased in popularity since Modood *et al's* (1994) study. The discussions relating to not being accepted as being 'Caribbean' by people living in the Caribbean (also described in Back 1996) suggests that these respondents feel their appreciation of the meaning of their 'ethnicity' is strongly influenced by their experiences in Britain, such that it exhibits greater similarity with those of British people than of people living in their 'homeland'. Evidence of the historical shift in the meaning of the 'Black Caribbean' identity may be seen in the discussions of the Caribbean group in Modood *et al's* (1994) study,

where (some) people talked about the Caribbean being the only place where they felt part of the majority, and able to blend in. Here, discussions of the Caribbean were used as a means of highlighting the difference between 'Black British' people and those living in the Caribbean, and the meaningless nature of measures which consider them members of the same ethnic group. For Black Caribbean respondents in this sample, being 'Black' was a means of highlighting difference from the dominant 'majority' in Britain, but it was also insufficient to enable incorporation into the 'majority' in the Caribbean: suggesting a sense of social isolation and rootlessness; perhaps further encouraged by the apparent lack of a strong 'Black community' in Britain, unlike that recognised by respondents in the 'Asian community'. In contrast, the (real and imagined) links with the 'homeland' and the strong 'Asian' community in Britain provide further support for the imposed immalleability of the 'ethnic' experience among 'Bangladeshi', 'Indian' and 'Pakistani' people. "Here, the notion of 'home' means simply the centre of one's world, not in a geographical but ontological sense, a place to be found, a place of Being.... 'home' is produced not simply through a particular address or residence but through the interconnection of habitation, meaning and ritual" (Back *et al* 2001). Put like this, it is easy to appreciate the impact of such rootlessness on your sense of social place and group affiliation.

Mahtani's (2002) investigation of attachments to the identification of 'mixed race' found agreement with these findings, particularly the lack of elaboration by those considered as being of 'mixed ethnicity'. But again there was evidence, in these findings, of multiple label use and of the influence of powerful others in the negotiation of appropriate 'ethnic' labels. People with 'mixed ethnic' parentage described a perceived need to fulfil people's expectations of the meaning of particular labels, and their feelings of inadequacy at not having particular skills with which to do so and so legitimate their access to these labels. In general, people with 'mixed' white British and non-white ethnic minority parentage considered this to provide them with a form of (externally) *authorised* access to particular ethnic labels and therefore seemed to label themselves less problematically than people from other non-white ethnic groups who considered themselves 'British' but did not have any 'white British' parentage. There were positive aspects considered to be related to a 'mixed' identification: bridging two ethnic groups, as "entrepreneurs or cultural brokers" (Eriksen 2002:65, see also Tizard and Phoenix 1993). But people's discussions suggested that this simplicity was also related to not being accepted as being entitled to other labels (what Eriksen calls "neither-nor" (2002:63)) rather than a choice to remain "both-and". Elsewhere findings have suggested that people with 'mixed' ethnic parentage may not, in fact, feel 'enough' of a particular ethnic group to claim it as an identification (Anthias 2002, Lopez 2003). It may be, then, that the 'mixed' label is acceptable to the gatekeepers of particular 'ethnic' labels as it simultaneously emphasises similarity with and difference from their sense of, for example, 'true Britishness', and therefore is less problematised and demands less justification than access to other labels.



As found elsewhere (Warikoo 2005), people from each non-white ethnic minority group described the frustrations of not being able to label yourself as you would choose. Again there appeared to be ethnic differences in responses to this external influence, however. Among people with Indian and Black Caribbean heritage, this situation led to the use of more hybrid labels, while Bangladeshi and Pakistani people persisted with the label 'British', despite recognising their continuing exclusion. These findings are interesting in light of work undertaken in the US where people from ethnic minority groups are much less likely to report being, simply, 'American' (Warikoo 2005), and also work undertaken in the UK with people with 'mixed' ethnic heritage which supports a view that being 'English' demands white skin (Tizard and Phoenix 1993). Eriksen comments:

This kind of process [of adaptation towards the majority culture] is very common among discriminated minorities, but it presupposes that there is a real, practical possibility of removing the stigma imposed by the dominant population. (2002:30)

The only respondents, here, who might be considered to have any real opportunity to remove this stigma are those with Irish ancestry and, indeed, removing cultural signifiers such as accents would seem to have enabled people with Irish heritage to become invisible to this dominant population, to the extent that they consider themselves (empowered to label themselves) 'English'; or at least empowered to 'vacate' Irishness (Back 1996). Interestingly, the retained discussion of Irish heritage and discussions of being 'European' could also suggest attempts to 'vacate', or at least distance yourself from some of the more negative aspects of, Englishness.

But in contrast to Eriksen's (2002) suggestion, these findings also suggest that cultural adaptation occurs amongst people who also recognise the restrictions imposed on the acceptability of their preferred label choices and the way that this label use requires negotiation with other interested parties, including members of the 'ethnic majority' population, people from other minority groups and others in what might be considered your 'ethnic community'. The need or desire to undercommunicate ethnic difference in public situations has been described elsewhere (Eriksen 2002), and is supported by the ability of some of these respondents to maintain their, for example, 'traditional' "*Bangladeshi*" culture "*at home*", while interacting with people in the public domain in normalised "*white*" ways, which are more acceptable to the ethnic majority. People may also overcommunicate their similarities with the dominant culture, as can be seen in the way in which people from 'ethnic minority' groups may emphasise the differences between people from other 'ethnic minority' and majority groups, in order to highlight the similarities between themselves (or members of 'their' ethnic group) and

‘British’ people. In each case, the aim was to encourage a sense of unity: either in an attempt to engender a sense of similarity between your own and the dominant group, which may require emphasising your differences from other ethnic minorities; to encourage a sense of groupness with members of your own ethnic group through emphasising the similarities between members, and difference from members of other groups; or to support a sense of cross-ethnic commonality in the face of common exclusion. Whether I have found evidence of such cross-ethnic organisation I feel is debateable, however, as I shall describe below. To support such cross-ethnic integration, and during the discussions of the, particularly, inapplicability of certain less radical labels, people described in depth in what ways, and to what extent, they could be considered ‘British’.

Unlike others in the sample, ‘white British’ people appeared to exist relatively free of the consideration of the relevance of particular ethnic labels or of the influence of their ‘ethnicity’ on their life: further evidence of the security power brings. As suggested in the literature (Tyler 2003, Ville and Guérin-Pace 2005) many ‘white British’ people did not even consider themselves to have an ‘ethnicity’, drawing attention to the contextual nature of ‘ethnicity’, and that its very creation is in response to the recognition of problems. But people also felt secure in the meaning behind the label ‘British’: both what it meant to themselves and to others and despite this lack of explicit discussion. Being ‘British’ was considered unproblematic. As William Hague, the British Conservative Politician, has commented: “There always used to be something very un-British about trying to define who the ‘British’ were. Perhaps that is because we were so sure of ourselves that we were mildly embarrassed to spell it out.” (2000:38). So, there was an assumption that this meaning could not and would not be contested, so much so that it did not require vocalising (Ville and Guérin-Pace 2005, Johnson 2002). As Kumar puts it:

If you are clearly in charge, you do not need to beat the drum or blow the bugle too loudly. To do so in fact would be to threaten the very basis of that commanding position, by reminding other groups of their inferiority and perhaps provoking them to do something about it (2000:590)

Respondents were particularly unhappy about ‘spelling it out’ through the use of a ‘white’ prefix, perhaps evidence of the normalisation of white English culture in Britain rather than efforts to promote ethnic inclusivity, supporting the findings of the Parekh report that: “The unstated assumption remains that ‘Britishness’ and ‘whiteness’ go together, like roast beef and Yorkshire pudding” (Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain 2000:24). That ‘British’ people who might be described as being from ethnic minority groups felt pressured to use ‘ethnic’ (minority) prefixes for their labels (such as ‘Black British’) also suggests a desire among dominant groups for people to emphasise their difference from *normal* (white (Modood

*et al* 1994)) ‘British’ people, while they remain able to ignore cultural influences on their lives. ‘White British’ people also find reassurance in their ability to de-ethnicise their ‘ethnicity’ by considering it a *national* label, and one which is therefore disconnected from considerations of ‘ethnicity’ (McCrone 2002). Attempts to divorce ‘Britishness’ and ‘whiteness’ have been described elsewhere as a means to distance yourself from any recognition of the way in which racism structures to lives and experiences of people from ethnic minority groups in British (Back 1996) and any associated appreciation of responsibility. Here, there was an absence from the interviews of white British people of discussions of the affect of racism on the informal and formal systems in which people operated: such that such appreciation was left to those who felt themselves victimised by this “*white system*”. There did not seem to be evidence here of the way in which “the documentation and interpretation of whiteness that come from the perspective of those who are not categorised white have...begun to be recognised as a valid contribution to the way white folks see themselves” (Ware 2002:22). These findings suggest the traditional and silent security of the self-awareness of the powerful persists. Unproblematised, even, by research and other bureaucracy which, under their control, maintains these assumptions that it is the ‘non-British’ who are problematic and require adaptation.

### **The role of the recognition of ‘culture’**

Respondents employed a number of ways of accessing their ‘ethnicity’ which might be considered evidence for the ‘enculturation’ component of ‘ethnicity’ found quantitatively, and also an appreciation of a form of essentialised ‘ethnicity’: which at its most extreme described innate differences in the character of people from particular ‘ethnic’ groups. The ‘maintenance’, or not, of particular ethnically-specified traditions was influential on label choice. Those with what might be considered a more ‘cross-ethnically’-integrated, and less ‘traditional’, lifestyle adopted more ‘Anglified’ and hybrid labels. This behavioural and attitudinal aspect of ‘ethnicity’ may involve discussions of a collective memory related to a ‘homeland’ and processes of migration, and how this has affected ethnically-specified attitudes and behaviours. Interestingly, real and perceived links with the ‘homeland’ appeared less significant for this sample, compared with the discussions of respondents in other studies (Modood *et al* 1994): for example, through the reduced use of the term ‘Gujarati’ as an appropriate choice of label and the reduced expectation of a permanent return to the ‘homeland’, for example. Although the importance of the sense of ‘community’ provided by an appreciation of a ‘homeland’ retained importance for some respondents (Back *et al* 2001). People discussed a number of ethnically-specified customs which could be utilised in the expression of an ‘ethnicity’, including the consumption of particular foods, speech, ‘lifestyle’ and ‘attitude’ as well as their social interaction and roles. People also described how cultural ‘traditions’ were shifting, and of a “*generation gap*” (within the ‘Asian’ community), which was expressed, by older respondents, in terms of the “*bad behaviour*” of the young and, by younger respondents, in terms of their

disillusion with the traditional 'cultural enforcers' of the Asian community and the Mosque and their hypocritical and dishonest behaviour. But there was also discussion as to how far these apparent 'traditions' were actually traditional and how they had been influenced by interaction with the external audience (Gilroy 1987). It was apparent that cultural markers could be adopted post-hoc to justify and therefore take control of the labels which were imposed from the outside. This enabled a shift in the relationship which people experienced with their 'ethnic' status: from one which signified only a position as a member of a stigmatised and victimised group to one associated with a positive and meaningful characteristic which could be celebrated.

People described how their lifestyle, or that of their parents, was "*what Indian ought to be in England*". Supporting the statements reporting that people would not be recognised as 'Caribbean in the Caribbean' is the conclusion drawn from findings of the FNS that "the Caribbean or Black associational identity was not something brought over from the Caribbean but developed in Britain, especially among the Caribbean born children of migrants" (Modood 1997:336), felt, by the author, to be a consequence of the "racial rejection" experienced by this group who responded by developing an 'ethnic' distinctiveness through 'Black' churches, Patois-Creole and particular forms of dress. One respondent, here, described how he adopted particular hair-styles to mirror his recently-enhanced ethnic awareness, what might be considered a form of ethnic "*badge*". Another, how his mother had reacted to his "*perfect English*", saying that he was "*not English*" and should develop a language which presented his hybrid identity, which was "*halfway*" between being 'English' and 'Jamaican'. It is also telling that many of the characteristics considered inherent to particular ethnic groups – Black people being "*loud*", "*violent*" and "*partying a lot*" for example – have close parallels with the stereotypes of Black people presented by the British media, Government and other formal, powerful British institutions (Gilroy 1987, Essed 1992). These 'inherent' characteristics might therefore seem anything but primordial. These findings suggest that the media presentation of the behaviour of members of 'white British' groups, as far as it relates to teenage pregnancies and illicit drug taking, would also seem to have had an affect on the attitudes of the groups around them: towards 'white British' people and also in terms of their attitudes towards their own 'choice' of 'ethnic' label.

Further evidence for the lack of 'ethnic' appreciation of 'white British' people and also of the role of power in the perceived need for forms of 'ethnic' expression was their lack of recognition of particular 'cultural habits': supporting ideas of a 'rationalised whiteness', described above (Perry 2001). 'White British' respondents recognised the importance of 'cultural traditions' for people from other ethnic groups, and these sensibilities were pandered to, but there was also a sense that this was accompanied by a perception that groups engaging in such behaviours were culturally inferior: apparent in the belief of one 'Indian' respondent that

this support was “*very very patronising*”. Although a ‘British’ way of life was described as involving particular behaviours such as working, eating meat and drinking alcohol, Britishness was considered cultureless (Perry 2001), and these were presented as rational actions, rather than cultural customs. A number of commentators have described the way in which ‘new racism’ (Barker 1981) and the current emphasis on cultural diversity draws attention away from the injustices and cross-group commonalities in the experiences of disadvantage and discrimination of people from ‘ethnic minority’ groups in Britain today (Gilroy 1987, Essed 1992, Baumann 1999). Groups are presented as having particular inherent ‘cultural issues’ which need to be addressed in ‘culturally-appropriate’ ways. As a consequence, such groups become (re)essentialised: their apparent incompatibilities emphasised and reinforced, but in a way which is presented as inclusive rather than stigmatising; supposedly accepting of the particular idiosyncrasies which are theirs (and only theirs) to be celebrated. As a consequence the divisive nature of such policies are camouflaged. The concerns of ‘swamping’ presented in the media and British Government these days are focussed more on (white) ‘asylum seekers’ than (non-white) ‘ethnic minorities’ again detracting from the racist underpinnings of these sentiments. But the argument that ‘normal’ (white) English people can only be expected to cope with too much cultural dilution remains the same.

Related to this is the sense that people from ethnic minority groups can continue to practise ‘their’ customs as long as they do so in private “*at home*” or at particularly sanctioned public events and therefore – not conflicting with what is perceived to be the normal ‘way of life’ of ‘British’ people. Publically, at least, people from ethnic minority groups are expected to “*fit in*” (Gilroy 1987, Back 1996, Back *et al* 2001): supporting a white British attitude of “multiculturalist nationalism” (Fortier 2005:560) where “the new nation is now re-imagined as the result of a timeless mixing of cultures, in a typical melting-pot assimilationist stew where differences are dissolved and assimilated into a palatable diversity” (Fortier 2005:561). So, British people are willing to ‘overlook’ ‘obvious’ differences, as long as groups agree to conform to ‘British ways’, support British institutions (strive to be ‘British’) and not discuss their experiences of racism (Fortier 2005). Similar, to the discussions of Back *et al* (2001) regarding ‘wearing the shirt’: playing for the ‘right’ team, or adopting the ‘correct’ behaviour, a means to avoid racist victimisation (Back *et al* 2001). Perhaps not surprisingly, such attitudes have been shown to produce considerable frustration among people from ethnic minority groups (Modood *et al* 1994, Back 1996), although similar frustrations did not seem to be voiced here.

So white British ethnicity was not ‘cultural’ nor even ‘ethnic’, it did not involve customs, but was presented as rational, effective and superior (Kumar 2000, Fortier 2005). There was an awareness of a group history associated with being (white) ‘British’, which was important to a sense of group identification more generally (Pryke 2003, Ashmore *et al* 2004). Here, this story

only included the elements of history which included the victories of the Second World War – military prowess against the ultimate foe, supporting a view that ‘the English’ alone saved the world from ‘the Nazis’. The media response to the Parekh report (Commission on the Future of Multi-Ethnic Britain 2000) also included reference to Boadicea, the Magna Carta, the abolitionist movement, Waterloo and VE day as “evidence of the enduring British values of fairness, resilience, tolerance, democracy and decency” (Fortier 2005:564). ‘White British’ people in this sample were careful to promote inclusionist attitudes – debating the need for the label ‘white’, and tending not to mention the racist experiences of people from ethnic minority groups (unlike the discussions of other respondents). The potentially more discomfiting group stories stemming from Britain’s colonial past (for example) are conspicuously absent from accounts (Neal 2002), however, despite the importance of their ‘appreciation’ in the views of ‘white British’ people held by people from ethnic minority groups, found elsewhere (Modood *et al* 1994).

### **The impact of inclusive and exclusive ‘others’**

People’s label use was related to their consideration of their ethnic community. So, ‘Black’ and ‘Asian’ people, for example, considered their ethnic community to be UK-based and broader than those labelling themselves less radically. Eriksen describes two forms of ethnic group recognition which I feel to be of relevance in terms of the identification of ethnic communities: those which allow for degrees of difference between different individuals – such that people may be more or less like ‘us’ along an “axis of identity” – termed “analog”; and those which encourage more clear cut and unambiguous distinctions – called “digital” (2002:66). I feel these data provide examples of each, which become more or less important depending on circumstance. In general, white British people appear to consider all people from ‘ethnic minority groups’ to be different from ‘white British’ people. But there was also a common distinction between ‘white’, ‘Black’ and ‘Asian’ people which, on all sides, placed ‘Black’ people closer to ‘white’ people: each group considering ‘Asian’ people to be more behaviourally distinct from ‘British’ ways (Modood *et al* 1994, Back *et al* 2001, Tyler 2003, Burdsey 2004). Interestingly, for ‘Black’ and ‘white’ people the inclusion of South Asian groups in this comparison appeared to be only recognised in situations which demanded that attention be given to the existence of these groups. The reference to ‘Black’ groups by people employing South Asian labels was also infrequent. People who classified themselves as ‘Irish’ seemed to place themselves inbetween the ‘white British’ and ‘Black’ groups, while the discussions of people with Caribbean and South Asian heritage did not seem to consider ‘Irish’ people as being in any way distinct from other ‘white’ people. The differences between ‘Indian’, ‘Pakistani’ and ‘Bangladeshi’ people were never vocalised other than in relation to a place of birth or ‘homeland’.

As mentioned earlier, attitudes also suggested a form of analog system, with some people classified as being 'Black Caribbean', 'Irish' and 'South Asian' considering themselves to be more 'British' as a consequence of, particularly, their lifestyle and attitudes, and, usually, adopting labels that reflect this. There were also within-group comparisons which were important for both establishing self-awareness and for justifying particular decisions or attitudes, and, for some, their belief that they held a more hybrid identity: including with 'Black' people who did not sufficiently support their community; more 'traditional' 'Caribbean' people living in the Caribbean; older more 'traditional' (and younger less 'traditional') 'Bangladeshis'; and Muslims who acted in ways which did not conform to the teachings of the Qur'an. Some people were keen to point out how group-level assumptions disguised important differences within their own and the other groups which were compared (Mahtani 2002). There is an awareness, however, on all sides, of a 'digital' attitude among white British people: such that any recognisable cultural variation would necessitate exclusion from being 'British', and from the benefits that this brings.

An important distinction made by Eriksen (2002) which is, I feel, key in terms of understanding the processes of 'ethnic' identification more generally relates to the motivation for the establishment of this ethnic community. Whether, following Sartre (1943), group solidarity stems from a sense of "*we-hood*" or "*us-hood*" (2002:67): the idea being that 'us' operates in opposition to an 'other' while 'we' may be considered more internally-motivated, relating to shared activities and perceived cultural similarities. Further evidence of an us-hood is found in Saeed *et al*'s (1999) study of Pakistani Muslim students in Glasgow, where responses to the 'I am not' section of the Twenty Statement Test (Kuhn and McPartland 1954) included 'white', 'racist' and 'a Paki'. On the surface, these findings suggest that both forms of groupness exist in Britain at this time. White British and 'Black' groups, as far as they may be considered to operate as a form of community, appear to do so in reaction to the perceived threat of, or exclusion by, another ethnic group, as an 'us'. While there was also a suggestion of an 'us' among 'Asian' groups, they also appeared to operate as a 'we': maintaining the importance of ethnically-specific networks; although the discussions of moral superiority and exclusion as well as the often cross-ethnic ('Indian', 'Pakistani' and 'Bangladeshi') nature of this 'Asian' community would suggest the persistence of the influence of interactions between themselves and wider society.

'Black' and 'Asian' communities operated to reduce the effects of exclusion (Modood *et al* 1994): awareness of which increased with the recognition of similar experiences of others in this community, through the reporting of the experiences of others via the media, for example. Such access was also important for the development of a sense of mutual fate (Ashmore *et al* 2004), which might perhaps be considered crucial for an *awareness* of the racialised nature of your

'ethnicity'. Interestingly 'Black Caribbean' respondents discussions of their 'ethnicity' tended to focus more on mutual experiences of exclusion; while the discussions of Bangladeshi, Indian and Pakistani respondents focussed more on an imagined community and inherent distinctiveness. This also has parallels with the attitudes of the British media and other institutions where, as Alexander puts it, "African-Caribbeans have 'race' and Asians have 'ethnicity'; or, as Benson succinctly encapsulates, 'Asians have culture, West Indians have problems' (1996)" (Alexander 2002:557, 2004). It will be interesting to see how the wider societal 'concerns' about, particularly, 'Asian youth' and crime (Home Office 2001, Alexander 2004) and the perceived 'Asian' "*generation gap*" will affect this perspective. Of course, this is not to suggest that the motivation for 'Asian' and 'Black' 'ethnic' awareness fundamentally varies, more that 'Asian' groups have a wider array of 'cultural' hooks on which to hang an inclusive sense of an 'ethnic' community (as suggested by the quantitative findings), which as a consequence is more effective as a counterpoint to any sense of exclusion.

Jenkins describes the way in which communal relationships may be "particularly efficient at socialising their members into group identity and dramatising the articulation of ethnic categorisation with respect to other ethnicities" (1997:66) and through the use of gossip, clearly designate 'ethnic' boundaries. This seems to be happening with particular effect in the different (south) Asian 'communities' described here, which exploited communal, occupational and religious commonalities and specificities to maintain a sense of community identity. As described above, this ethnic community is sufficiently powerful to override other forms of labelling which might be felt to be more appropriate, and also the potential identity erosion associated with migration (Hall 1992). There is a sense here, as has been suggested elsewhere (Modood *et al* 1994), that the greater demands made by this 'Asian' community on its members (compared with the other ethnic groups explored) could be the source of this greater resilience. Religion plays an important role in developing and maintaining 'ethnic' boundaries (Ecklund 2005). 'Asian' people were also more likely to describe the existence and importance of 'ethnically-specific' social networks in a range of settings: their lives appear, in general, more 'ethnically-specified' than people in the other 'ethnic' groups explored here. Their ties to their ethnic group could be considered 'thicker', which has been shown to have a powerful impact on ethnic identification (Cornell and Hartmann 1998, Liebler 2004): similar to the impact of behavioural and social embeddedness described elsewhere (Ashmore *et al* 2004). For individuals most wedded to this lifestyle, there may be a sense of normalisation and rationalisation among the attitudes of the 'Asian' community – *other* groups considered to behave deviantly, in comparison with the rational norms established in Bangladesh, India and Pakistan. The malleability of these supposedly traditional cultural markers and the deception described by some respondents as occurring in the Asian community in relation to this suggest that this is a reaction to the "cultural segmentation" (Alexander 2002:555, 2004) which is



imposed by wider society on ethnic minority groups with ‘unBritish’ habits perceived to be stubborn with regards to assimilation, however. A reaction to the external distancing of ‘Asian’ from white and Black groups, described above – which groups ‘Asians’ with asylum seekers and ‘extremists’ – blaming the victim’s culture (particularly their religion) for their problems and drawing attention away from the impact of discrimination (again).

There is also an awareness of the experiential commonalities of people from victimised groups, which was expressed in a broader use of the term ‘Black’ to include all people of non-white origin (Saeed *et al* 1999) (although some Irish people considered themselves included in this category, along with other people from white ethnic minority groups (Pryke 2003)), and also in the awareness of being a “*person with colour*”. Other studies have found support for this wider identification among South Asian groups (Modood 1997) and also the importance of this identification for those that do (Modood *et al* 1994). ‘Black’ was also considered an appropriate ethnic designator by the young people with ‘mixed’ ethnic heritage in Tizard and Phoenix’s (1993) study: ‘white’, however, was not. This would not seem to have produced the form of politicised collective awareness which has been described elsewhere in regard to the idea of ‘Blackness’ (Modood 1988, Miles 1994), however, such that people perceive themselves as “self-conscious group members in a power struggle on behalf of their group” (Simon and Klandermans 2001:319). As in the Modood *et al* (1994) study while people acknowledged similarities between Caribbean and South Asian communities and cultures, people also described differences between them which were unassailable, encouraged by the British media and (white) British society more generally – in the provision of services, for example (Ray 2003).

While the widespread nature of racism was acknowledged, respondents also went to considerable lengths to minimise the extent of its personal impact, as has been reported elsewhere (Verkuyten 1997, Anthias 2002, Bonilla-Silva and Embrick 2001, Chahal and Julienne 1999). Reducing racism to a part of ‘normal life’ could be argued to operate against the development of a formal organisation for reducing the problem, and its consequences. But this attitude also drew attention away from people’s sense of impotence regarding their ability to affect these experiences in a way which might form a strategy for coping with experiences or an awareness of racism: believing there to be a lack of need to act more effectively in dealing with racism than facing your inability to do so (Essed 1992). Ruggiero and Taylor (1997) found that minimising the influence of racism in experiences of, in this case, negative feedback (and therefore attributing this failure to themselves, personally) was protective of social state self-esteem and maintained a perception of control in both performance and social domains (see also Ruggiero and Taylor 1995). Interestingly, this work suggested ethnic differences in the extent to which discrimination was minimised: ‘Black’ people less likely to minimise the effects of

discrimination than 'Asian' people (although, as with other studies conducted in the US, these were 'East Asian', rather than 'South Asian', respondents). This work also suggests that those ethnic differences may be a consequence of differences in the opportunities for forms of more positive 'ethnic' expression. And there may be other reasons why awareness of racialisation has not produced more organised resistance. Responses to and protection from racism was vocalised around a need to 'stick with you own kind'. The means of access to state-provided resources was reported to have produced jealousy among those who perceive themselves (at least) equally deserving but to have been denied such assistance, even when the funding for the 'facilities' described had not been obtained from public sources. Such attitudes engender a sense of being a member of a disadvantaged group, which has a differential experience compared with the other disadvantaged groups located around you. These developments therefore, combined with the vested interests of more-powerful individuals (within particular 'communities') and other powerful groups – which emphasise inherent and unavoidable 'ethnic' and 'cultural' difference – discourage the formation of 'cross-ethnic' allegiances, even when it might be beneficial to do so.

While a number of commentators have discussed the power of the (powerful) 'other' in the negotiation of group membership and labelling (Jenkins 1994, 1997, Eriksen 2002), many more have focussed on the internal processes of ethnic definition with an implication that people seek out ethnic affiliations without external stimuli. This work suggests that such studies could potentially be very wide of the mark. Modood *et al* conclude: "For many Caribbeans and for second generation Asians the sense of exclusion by white people is one of the principal reinforcements of their sense of ethnicity" (1994:104). Tizard and Phoenix's (1993) study found experiences of racism to be key for skin colour to become central to the lives of young people of 'mixed' ethnic parentage. There are also examples of work showing quantitatively the impact of racism on the 'ethnic' awareness of members of different 'ethnic groups' (Karlsen and Nazroo 2000, 2002a). Sears *et al*, for example, state: "evidently, perceiving one's own group to be the victim of discrimination distances those students from feeling fully identified with America, though it does not play a major role in drawing them closer to their ethnic group" (2003:428). This work has provided clear evidence of the potential mismatch between the nominal and the virtual aspects of 'ethnicity', depending on the person, place and time of any particular incarnation, and also the impact of external versus internal considerations of identification – including in terms of this mismatch between the label and the lived experience of particular forms of 'ethnicity'.

Jenkins comments:

A claim to ethnic identity must be validated by an audience of 'outsiders' or 'others', because without such an audience the issue would not arise, but it seems to make little sense to talk about an ethnicity which does not at some point recognize itself as such (1994:207)

The important phrase here, I believe, is 'at some point', my sense from these data being that people seek to find a positive and internally-ratified identification based on membership of a particular 'ethnic' group to give substance to externally-imposed labels: minimising the extent to which this labelling must be acknowledged as being outside their control and inherently negative. Indeed, it is my opinion that 'ethnicity' may be imposed solely from the outside (Jenkins 1997). While aspects of a 'homegrown' lifestyle (from a 'homeland') may be adopted in reaction to this labelling, these findings do not support theories of an enduring, pre-existing or primordial 'ethnicity'.

While Eriksen describes the importance of 'ethnicity' for providing meaning and organisational channels for, what he calls, "culturally defined interests" (2002:19), then, what I feel he at times fails to give sufficient consideration to is that these culturally-defined interests and other motivations for 'grouphood' are a response to the exclusion imposed by powerful groups, rather than any more 'inherent' form of (internal) need. While there is a role for an agent in this process, then, these findings suggest that this is largely restricted to that of response than of primary affect. As might be expected, the experience of 'ethnicity' for these powerful groups appears very different: the ability to define others and normalise and rationalise what would be (in comparison) their own 'culture' leading to a hazy awareness of its 'virtuality'; despite their discussions regarding the cultural similarities between those considered (necessarily juxtaposed against those who are not) more 'British'.

Jenkins (1994) also describes, theoretically, how the virtual and nominal aspects of identity may shift independent of each other. I have shown clear evidence of this operating in two ways – where certain aspects of ('internal') identity formation are considered (by the individual or 'their' ethnic group) to override those which construct the label, and where the power of external groups prevents the adoption of labels which seek to recognise the reduced significance, for example, of victimised or 'minority' status in the experience of that identity, or to demand a mutual awareness of the 'ethnic' nature of the identity of that dominant 'other'. This would support the idea of "*the paradox of multiculturalism*" (Eriksen 2002:145), where people considered by the powerful to be from ethnic minority groups are "positively forced to adorn themselves with an ethnic label, whether they want to or not" (2002:145). It follows that these labels will conform to the ideas of 'ethnic difference' held by the dominant group. This may also be seen from the discussions of appropriate labels, which tended to employ terminology which would be widely recognised and generally meaningful. This paradox also

supports the finding, elsewhere, of the unhappiness voiced by this dominant group when any group considered to be similar should demand they are considered to be different (Kumar 2000, Hickman *et al* 2005, Phillips and Holton 2005). The stimulus for such 'ethnic' identification thus appeared to be externally located – in an imposed 'ethnic community' and through racialisation as well as in the research process itself. People from 'ethnic minority' groups, as Back comments, "always called back to take some account of public definitions of their culture and identity" (1996:248).

Weber (1978) argues that the belief in common decent shared by members of an ethnic group occurs *as a consequence* of political action, suggesting that awareness of your ethnic affiliation stems more from other people's ideas of who you are, than who you consider yourself to be. For these respondents, ethnic affiliation was motivated by questions related to their own perceived ethnic group membership from individuals or in research or ethnic monitoring settings; or by being informed by people seeking to make judgements on them: either to contain them within a particular 'ethnic community' or to exclude them. People then respond to this labelling by developing a more positive sense of themselves based on this categorisation – creating symbols, or attaching new significance to certain behaviours or attitudes, to *present* your 'ethnic' status to other members of this group and to others – using these experiences to justify a preference and even an (internally or externally motivated) need for own-ethnic relationships. Where I believe these findings suggest conclusions which stray from the views of Weber, and others, is in the requirement for *group action*. While these respondents discussed an awareness of their ethnic group, or at least what ethnic group they would be considered to belong to; whether they felt this group membership to be meaningful to themselves personally was sometimes disputed. People did not discuss ethnically-specific activity as an attempt to promote a sense of unity, as has been found elsewhere (Modood *et al* 1994). Rather, people sought to justify their categorisation by means which exhibited their cultural commonalities without any sense that this was a means for mobilisation. Perhaps evidence of the replacing of 'politics of difference' – which would suggest some means for mobilisation – with those of 'culture difference', which would not (Alexander 2000, 2002). Even ethnically-specific social support networks were mobilised according to need, and then disbanded; other (cross-ethnic) relationships often considered more useful (Mahtani 2002).

## **Strengths and limitations**

These analyses have a number of strengths: many of which stem from the integration of the two datasets. The quantitative survey used a nationally-representative sample. This was drawn using data from the 1991 British census, which enabled the inclusion of respondents from areas which contained both high and low densities of people from the different ethnic groups explored, unlike other studies of this type. The subsequent availability of quantitative data on these individuals (from both the first phase of EMPIRIC and the HSE) enabled the drawing of a large comprehensive qualitative sample. The prior involvement of individuals in the HSE also enabled the appropriate use of interviewers speaking languages other than English. Further, the inclusion of white (minority and majority) groups has allowed an important extension of previous work, which has either focussed on non-white groups, or has not explored groups in combination. While the quantitative analyses have necessarily combined potentially heterogeneous individuals into larger 'ethnic' categories; some exploration of the within-group dynamics has been possible through the use of the qualitative data, including the effect of having parents with potentially differing ethnic affiliations. Although there are of course other groups which remain excluded, including people which experience particular forms of exclusion such as asylum seekers and Roma peoples. Most importantly, the quantitative analyses have shown that ethnic identification may involve a number of interrelated processes, and that the influence of these different processes varies by broad characteristics, such as gender, age, social position, residential area and migration status. The qualitative data have both added support to these findings and provided more depth: exploring more subtle variations between individuals and between groups and highlighting the dynamics of the interrelationship between these processes.

But, there are a number of issues which should be taken into account when interpreting these findings. In terms of the qualitative investigation, interviewers were trained to ask about respondents' own definitions of their ethnic background but not to probe overly, because an in-depth understanding of ethnicity was not required for the (original) focus of the research. Importantly, this has produced a more spontaneous account of 'ethnicity' and the importance of ethnic identification on respondents' lives, which suffers less from the over-inflation of the importance of particular issues and identities produced by repeated and in-depth probing. But this also means we have not been provided with the consistent depth of information which would be available from primary analyses – where each respondent would have been asked to discuss in detail the meaning of 'ethnicity' to their lives, and which might have produced greater overlap between the different respondents. And this may explain why there are some areas – such as the importance of the local area in collective identity – which have been found elsewhere (Hickman et al 2005, Back 1993, 1996), but have not been described here (beyond the importance of a British-based rather than wider geographically located identity). But these

data have provided an important insight into the role which 'ethnicity' plays in people's lives, and the meaning of 'ethnicity' to ordinary people.

This research suggests that simply asking someone about their ethnicity can in some way construct it. And I believe that this explains why there has been more recourse to the use of or debate regarding the appropriateness of 'less radical' labels here than has been found elsewhere (Back 1996). We must be aware, then, that the data gathered in any setting will be generated to some extent by the research process. I have described the attempts made by some respondents to pre-judge the motivations for the questions asked (on forms, for example), and therefore the answer which was 'expected' by the investigators. It is difficult to assess the consequences of this. In ethnically-matched interviews (interviewer and interviewee) it may be that a respondent could feel encouraged to identify strongly with a positive form of 'ethnic' identity. Alternatively, a cross-ethnic interview situation, particularly where the interviewer is a member of a dominant 'ethnic' group, might lead respondents to emphasise an identification based on the more visible aspects of their ethnicity – in an effort to support the preconceptions of the interviewer, to give the 'right' answer. The consequence of this may be that the nature of discussions varied according to the extent of the 'ethnic match' between the interviewer and interviewee. Investigation of the effect of the ethnicity of the interviewer did not suggest that there were any particular problems that should cause concern as far as this could be ascertained (see Appendix C).

Moreover, while much has been written about the extent of the potential benefits of ethnic matching (see for example, Grewal and Richie 2006), there is a need to question the epistemological assumptions regarding ideas of racialised subjectivity and, particularly, those of the existence of a single stable truth that underlie work exploring so-called 'race of interviewer' effects (Gunaratnam 2003).

[In race-of-interviewer effect studies] the research subject is one who is assumed to have a racialized un/consciousness and who is assumed to be deeply threatened by racialized difference. It is a research subject who is anxious and emotional, and whose responses therefore cannot be trusted (Gunaratnam 2003:56)

Such patronising attitudes are, I believe, untenable. The findings presented here suggest that for some, 'ethnicity' is highly context dependent, and, indeed, emotive, if we assume that the experience of the interrelationship between different aspects of your personal history crucial to your appreciation and experience of your 'ethnicity'. Ethnic matching could be considered as a further means to ascribe, even enforce, a sense of a particular form of 'ethnicity' and of commonality where there may be none. Other characteristics, such as, in this case the

researcher's university affiliation for example, may produce a sense of difference which may override any sense of 'ethnic similarity' – particularly if the 'normal' state for members of 'ethnic minority' groups is considered to be working-class, as was suggested by some respondents here. It is also important to note here that this cuts both ways: the field notes for one interview reporting the inferiority complex developed by the interviewer when the respondent revealed her occupation as a university lecturer. The research process itself serves to provide a particular perspective on an individual's reality, and there are a number of issues which may be considered to 'distort' the way an individual presents their appreciation of their reality. But such attitudes also assume that there is a single truth which may be more or less disclosed and that this problem is somehow research specific and not related to the wider social context in which the work is generated. Artefactual rather than providing insight into the negotiation of ethnic meaning. I believe it is safer to be mindful of the way the research process may affect our findings, rather than falsely reassuring ourselves that we have removed our 'confounders' through processes such as ethnic matching.

A further problem produced by the secondary nature of these analyses is that the question exploring ethnic background varied between respondents. With some respondents, interviewers asked a very vague question regarding their 'ethnic background', which allowed respondents to interpret the question how they 'chose', before probing further. With others, interviewers made specific reference to the classification of 'ethnicity' made in the quantitative arm of the survey, or suggested possible labels which the respondent might consider meaningful. More problematic was that some interviewers made a conscious decision not to ask people classified as 'white British' about their ethnicity. Findings from the EMPIRIC study suggest that this may have affected ten of the nineteen interviews with white British respondents. Further, three of the four white British respondents were prompted by the interviewers in their discussion of an appropriate ethnic label. This was motivated by confusion on the part of respondents regarding their ethnic status and therefore provides further evidence that 'white British' people are less able to engage in a nuanced discussion of their ethnic background than respondents from other ethnic groups. The question asking what ethnicity 'means to you' was particularly enlightening, for each of the ethnic groups included.

But although the suggestions of the interviewers are likely to have affected the range of options or criteria which respondents considered in their response to the question on ethnic background; these respondents were confident to disagree with what they felt to be the interviewer's imposed categorisation. Indeed they sometimes used this to describe their motivation for their disagreement in terms of what they considered to be their ethnic status, and other more appropriate labels. Questions, which could perhaps be considered more closed, were therefore often followed by further discussion which was able to engage with the respondent's

own ideas of their ethnicity. People with Irish heritage expressed more explicit disagreement between the suggestions of the interviewer and their beliefs regarding their ethnic status, compared with the more subtle distinctions drawn by some respondents from other ethnic groups. But it is also likely that this was also affected by the improved ability of less visible minorities to shift between different ethnic identifiers (in this case 'Irish' and 'English'/'British'). In the analyses this provided additional opportunities to consider other grounds for ethnic affiliation than skin colour and geographical ancestry.

There are additional problems related to the secondary analysis of qualitative data but on the whole these issues seem most problematic when the researcher was not involved in the original research, or in the whole research process. As I have described in the Methods section, I was involved in each stage – from the design to the reporting – of both phases of the EMPIRIC study. And while these secondary analyses have been conducted single-handedly, the earlier analyses, as well as the data collection itself, were conducted by a team which enabled important crosschecking of these processes. The motivation for the initial qualitative study was to explore ethnic variations in discussions of mental illhealth and other problems which might impact on psychological health. The sampling frame adopted therefore included people who exhibited symptoms of psychological difficulties and others who had experienced problems which might have encouraged such problems. There was no systematic variation in the discussions of 'ethnicity' according to these criteria. A further issue may be that while people were asked explicitly about their experiences or perceptions of racism, they were not asked directly about positive experiences of ethnicity in interactions with others and in different circumstances, although some respondents did mention them spontaneously. As well as involving an original member of the research team (Heaton 2000), it is argued that some of the issues related to secondary analysis of qualitative data can be overcome through the triangulation of quantitative and qualitative findings (Le Roux and Vidal 2000). I believe I have done this to good effect.

## **Conclusions**

This work explores whether and in what ways 'ethnicity' is perceived to be important to the lives of people in Britain. The consistency across the different methods of data collection and with previous work provides reassurance as to the generalisability of these findings, and also evidence as to the important differences which may exist in different 'groups' and over time. It is clear that 'ethnicity' means different things to different people: not only do people express and live their 'ethnicity' in different ways, but the ways in which people consider their 'ethnicity' also shifts – according to context, location and historical period. But there are important similarities in the ways in which an individual's 'ethnicity' may be vocalised, which



might be influenced by their own sense of who they are (and what that means) but which appears more strongly influenced by the attitudes of others.

This work has provided an important departure from previous investigations. The methodology itself is innovative and somewhat unique – the value of the secondary analyses of qualitative data still rarely recognised and even less frequently exploited. The number of British nationally representative (quantitative) datasets available with which to explore different ethnic groups remain relatively few. Those that include comparable samples of white minority and white majority groups, and information from which to explore processes of ethnic identification are even fewer. As a consequence large-scale empirical investigations of the processes of ethnic identification among different ethnic (minority and majority) groups in Britain have been on the whole unforthcoming. The combining of quantitative and qualitative data provides a rare opportunity for both deep and broad exploration. I feel the findings have presented the value of such methods in stark relief.

This work presents the purely subjective nature of ‘ethnicity’, and of ‘ethnic’ affiliation. In contrast to the conclusions (or assumptions) of some of the literature, ‘ethnicity’ is not considered uniformly important or even meaningful: across contexts as well as across individuals. Moreover, these findings speak strongly to the importance of external factors in people’s understanding of their own ‘ethnicity’. They suggest that ‘ethnic’ awareness may be externally driven, as a consequence of the influence of powerful others – both influential people who would consider themselves members of ‘your ethnic group’, and others with whom you interact. Without such influence, ‘ethnicity’ may remain unimportant and invisible. Opportunities for an internally driven identification appear to operate in reaction to this imposed ‘ethnicity’, supporting Bourdieu’s perception of the ‘agency in reaction’ in his ‘Habitus’ (1977): particular traditions and other efforts at enculturation appropriated in a post-hoc way to authenticate (in a more positive manner) and reaffirm control over a particular ‘ethnicity’. These findings also indicate the role of measurement in structuring, even creating, a particular ‘ethnic’ ascription. While the recognition of racism demands a consideration of ‘ethnicity’, concern about racism – as far as this leads to ethnic monitoring and investigation – can also be considered to, in some senses, generate it. As Maalouf (1998) states (above), your experience of ‘ethnicity’ cannot be separated from the other aspects of who you are: it is part of a lived experience that is consequent on a particular personal history. This may involve a positive celebration of groupness. But these findings have also shown how ‘ethnicity’ may be inescapable, and the conditions under which this imposition operates.

There has been recent debate regarding the use of more and less ‘objective’ methods of ‘ethnicity’ measurement (Smith 2002, Modood, Berthoud and Nazroo 2002, Cole 2003). The

argument revolves around whether the assignation of 'ethnic group' membership must "*always* be elected (self-selected) by the individuals concerned" (Smith 2002:405), which therefore suggests that the process of ascribing people to an ethnic group in the basis of familial origins, for example, , to be unhelpful. Smith (2002) comments: "Such a classification therefore runs the risk of ascribing people to an 'ethnic group' identity *whether or not* they accept such a classification, a practice which of course has a very dangerous history indeed, for example, in Nazi Germany, where people who may not have identified themselves as Jewish...found themselves labelled Jewish by the state solely because they had a Jewish family background" (2002:407). I do not doubt the importance of allowing people to self-identify with a particular 'ethnic' group. As I have shown here, not only may people categorise themselves very differently from those to which researchers, and others, would assign them: people's choice of label may vary widely from those which are offered. People may define themselves according to a number of very different criteria which are not accounted for by most measures. People may also consider a number of different (ethnic and other) labels to be applicable at any one time, as well as their sense of ethnicity shifting according to more widely appreciated influences, such as place of birth and length of residency. And these findings suggest that the use of meaningless categories produces concern and distrust among respondents.

But I feel that there are issues associated with 'ethnic' identification which Smith (2002) fails to incorporate into his argument, and relate to his premise that there is something meaningful as well as enduring and relatively static which people can identify and label as *their* 'ethnicity'. These findings show how 'ethnicity' *itself* is negotiated and actually defined by people for others. People's recognition of their 'ethnicity' is determined by their relationship to those around them, and this recognition therefore shifts. Those with the power to define others, and who are not affected by the definitions of less-powerful others, can exist without being forced to consider their 'ethnicity' in any way. Those with the power to negotiate groupness may also find themselves able to generate a protective 'ethnic community' and to demand affiliation from others. As a consequence, these individuals may develop a vested interest in the perpetuation of certain forms of 'ethnic' identification. Those who are less empowered find themselves categorised in a way which influences not only how they are enabled to live their lives – in terms of, for example, the work they do, the places they live and the way they are forced to live in fear of victimisation – but also how they perceive and may express their view of themselves. People from 'ethnic minority' groups in Britain are repeatedly reminded of the lack of power and opportunity they are afforded by the powerful – which promotes a sense either of unjustified unfairness (and frustration), or of deserved rewards, and hence negative self-esteem. Their actions as a 'member' of a particular 'ethnic' group can be interpreted in response to these stigmatising influences and expectations. This is perhaps presented most starkly in the way in which people from ethnic minority groups here report feeling unable even

to label themselves as they would choose, as a consequence of the reactions of these powerful groups. I would argue that there is little of 'ethnicity' beyond that which is dictated by those around you.

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## **Ethnic Minorities Psychiatric Morbidity Survey 2000**

### **Interviewer Questionnaire: English**

<b><u>Module</u></b>	<b><u>Page</u></b>
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12. Religion and spiritual beliefs	31
13. Ethnic identity	33

RespSex        Before I start the interview, I need to check that I have  
opened the right file for you.  
INTERVIEWER: CODE RESPONDENT'S SEX

RespAge        Can I just check, what is your date of birth?  
INTERVIEWER: ENTER:

RespName       Can I check, is your name still....(READ NAME FROM ARF) or  
have you changed it for any reason?:  
(IF CHANGED: INTERVIEWER UPDATE THE ARF LABEL)

RespMar        Are you...READ OUT...  
CODE FIRST TO APPLY  
1 married,  
2 living as married,  
3 separated,  
4 widowed,  
5 divorced,  
6 or, single and never married?

EActiv         SHOW CARD A  
Which of these descriptions applies to what you were doing  
last week, that is in the seven days ending {DATE LAST  
SUNDAY}  
CODE FIRST TO APPLY.

Estwrk        Did you do any paid work in the seven days ending {DATE  
LAST SUNDAY}, either as an employee or self-employed?

4Wklok        Thinking now of the four weeks ending {DATE LAST SUNDAY}.  
Were you looking for any paid work or Government training  
scheme at any time in those four weeks?

2WkStt        If a job or a Government training scheme had been  
available in the {TEXT FILL} would you have been able to  
start within two weeks?

EvJob         Have you ever been in paid employment or self-employed?

Othjob        Apart from the job you are waiting to take up, have you e  
ever been in paid employment or self-employed?

SameJob       Are you still in the same job that you were in when we  
interviewed you in {DATE OF HSE99 INTERVIEW}?

JobTtle       I'd like to ask you some details about your job/  
your most recent job/ the job you were doing last week.  
What is/was the name or title of the job?

Hours         Are/were you working full-time or part time?

EwtWrk        What kind of work do/did you do most of the time?

Emat         IF RELEVANT: What materials or machinery do/did you  
use?  
IF NONE USED, WRITE IN NONE

Eskills        What skills or qualifications are/were needed for the job?

Employ        Are/were you...READ OUT...  
1 an employee,  
2 or, self-employed?

Direct	Can I just check, in this job are/were you a Director of a limited company?
EmpSt	Are/were you a ...READ OUT... 1 Manager, 2 Foreman or supervisor, 3 Or, other employee?
NoEmps	Including yourself, about how many people are/were employed at the place where you usually work/ed?
Ind	What does/did your employer make or do at the place where you usually work/ed?
HaveEmp	Do/did you have any employees?
SeInd	What do/did you make or do in your business?
LastDr	When did you last speak to a doctor on your own behalf?
WhereDr	SHOW CARD B In the last six months, which of these doctors have you spoken to on your own behalf? CODE ALL THAT APPLY
OthDr	INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN OTHER KIND OF DOCTOR
SemiA	SHOW CARD C I would like to ask you about the last time you spoke to or visited a doctor on your own behalf. What was the matter with you? CODE ALL THAT APPLY
SemiB	What was the matter with you? INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN VERBATIM [OPEN]
SemiC	Over the past 6 months, have you had any illness or health problems you did not see your doctor about?
SemiD	SHOW CARD C What was the matter with you? CODE ALL THAT APPLY
SemiE	What was the matter with you? INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN
ServicA	SHOW CARD D Here is a list of health services. Have you used any of these services in the past 6 months? PROBE: What else? CODE ALL THAT APPLY
ServicB	SHOW CARD E And what about the health services on this card, have you used any of these in the past 6 months? PROBE: What else? CODE ALL THAT APPLY

The following questions are about people in your life who you feel close to and from whom you can obtain support (either emotional or practical) including close relatives and good friends.

NumClose      How many people do you feel very close to? (It does not matter where they live or whether you have seen them recently).  
INTERVIEWER ENTER NUMBER

WhoClose      SHOW CARD F  
Who have you felt {TEXT FILL} closest/next closest to in the last 12 months? Please describe in terms of their relationship to you and take your answer from this card.

OthClos      INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN OTHER

ClDist      How far away from you does this person live. Do they live... READ OUT...  
CODE ONE ONLY  
1 with you  
2 within walking distance  
3 within half an hour's drive  
4 more than half an hour but under one hour's drive  
5 more than one hour's drive or  
6 do they live overseas?

ClPersA      SHOW CARD G  
Thinking about the person you are {TEXT FILL} closest/next closest to, please tell us how you would rate the practical and emotional support they have provided for you in the last 12 months.  
How much in the last 12 months did this person give you information, suggestions and guidance that you found helpful?  
Please take your answer from this card.

ClPersB      SHOW CARD G  
How much in the last 12 months could you rely on this person (was this person there when you needed him/her)?  
Please take your answer from this card.

ClPersC      SHOW CARD G  
How much in the last 12 months did this person make you feel good about yourself?  
Please take your answer from this card.

ClPersD      SHOW CARD G  
How much in the last 12 months did you share interests, hobbies and fun with this person? Please take your answer from this card.

CLPerSE      SHOW CARD G  
How much in the last 12 months did this person give you worries, problems and stress? Please take your answer from this card.

ClPersF      SHOW CARD G  
How much in the last 12 months did you want to confide in (talk frankly, share feelings with) this person? Please take your answer from this card.

CLPersG      SHOW CARD G  
How much in the last 12 months did you confide in this person? Please take your answer from this card.

CLPersH      SHOW CARD G  
How much in the last 12 months did you trust this person with your most personal worries and problems? Please take your answer from this card

CLPersI      SHOW CARD G  
How much in the last 12 months would you have liked to have confided more in this person? Please take your answer from this card.

CLPersJ      SHOW CARD G  
How much in the last 12 months did talking to this person make things worse? Please take your answer from this card.

CLPersK      SHOW CARD G  
How much in the last 12 months did he/she talk about his/her personal worries with you? Please take your answer from this card.

CLPersL      SHOW CARD G  
How much in the last 12 months did you need practical help from this person with major things (eg look after you when ill, help with finances, children)? Please take your answer from this card.

CLPersM      SHOW CARD G  
How much in the last 12 months did this person give you practical help with major things? Please take your answer from this card.

CLPersN      SHOW CARD G  
How much in the last 12 months would you have liked more practical help with major things from this person? Please take your answer from this card.

CLPersO      SHOW CARD G  
How much in the last 12 months did this person give you practical help with small things when you needed it? (eg chores, shopping, watering plants, etc) Please take your answer from this card.

RelA      Are there any relatives outside your household with whom you have regular contact (either by visit, telephone, or letters)?

RelB      SHOW CARD H  
How often do you have contact with any relatives outside your household? Please take your answer from this card.  
INTERVIEWER NOTE: NOT NECESSARILY THE SAME PERSON EACH TIME

RelC      SHOW CARD H  
How often do you regularly visit or are visited by these relatives? Please take your answer from this card

RelD      How many relatives do you see once a month or more?  
INTERVIEWER RECORD

FrenA Are there any friends or acquaintances with whom you have regular contact (either by visit, telephone, or letters)?

SHOW CARD H

FrenB How often do you have contact with any friends or acquaintances? Please take your answer from this card.  
INTERVIEWER NOTE: NOT NECESSARILY THE SAME PERSON EACH TIME

SHOW CARD H

FrenC How often do you regularly visit or are visited by these friends or acquaintances? Please take your answer from this card.

FrenD How many friends or acquaintances do you see once a month or more?  
INTERVIEWER RECORD

I'd like to talk now about caring informally for others. Some people have extra responsibilities because they look after someone who is physically or mentally sick, handicapped or elderly.

CareA May I check, is there anyone either living with you or not living with you who is sick, handicapped or elderly whom you look after or give special help to, other than in a professional capacity (-for example, a sick or handicapped (or elderly) relative/husband/wife/child/friend, etc)?

CareB And does anyone look after, or give special help to, you because of sickness, disability or old age, other than in a professional capacity?

INTROCON I am now going to read out a list of statements. Please tell me how much you agree or disagree with each statement. Please take your answer from this card.

SHOW CARD I

CONHOMA At home, I feel I have control over what happens in most situations.

SHOW CARD I

CONHOMB At work, I feel I have control over what happens in most situations.

SHOW CARD I

CONHOMC I feel that what happens in my life is often determined by factors beyond my control.

SHOW CARD I

CONHOMD Over the next 5-10 years I expect to have many more positive than negative experiences.

SHOW CARD J

GENCONA In general, do you have different demands that you think are hard to combine?

SHOW CARD J

GENCONB In general, do you have enough time to do everything?

GENCONC	SHOW CARD J Considering the things you have to do at work, do you have to work very fast?
GENCOND	SHOW CARD J Considering the things you have to do at home, do you have to work very fast?
STRAINA	SHOW CARD K How often do you have any worries or problems with other relatives (eg parents or in-laws)?
STRAINB	SHOW CARD K How often does it happen that you do not have enough money to afford the kind of food or clothing you/your family should have?
STRAINC	SHOW CARD L How much difficulty do you have in meeting the payment of bills?
STRAIN D	SHOW CARD L To what extent do you have problems with your housing (eg too small, repairs, damp, etc)?
STRAINE	SHOW CARD L To what extent do you have problems with the neighbourhood in which you live (eg noise, unsafe street, few local facilities)?
 The next few questions are about things that may have happened to you in the last twelve months, that is, since {DATE 12 MONTHS AGO TODAY}	
Attack	During that time, has anyone physically attacked you?
Attnumb	How many times have you been attacked in the last twelve months?
AttackNo	INTERVIEWER: ENTER NUMBER OF TIMES RESPONDENT HAS BEEN ATTACKED IN THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS
Attrace	Do you think you were attacked/any of the attacks were for reasons to do with your ethnicity?
DamProp	In the last twelve months, has anyone deliberately damaged any property that belonged to you?
Damnum	How many times has this happened in the last twelve months?
PropNumb	INTERVIEWER: ENTER NUMBER OF TIMES RESPONDENT HAS HAD PROPERTY DAMAGED IN THE LAST TWELVE MONTHS
Damrace	Do you think your property was damaged/any of these attacks on your property were for reasons to do with your ethnicity?
Insult	In the last twelve months, has anyone insulted you for reasons to do with your ethnicity? By insulted, I mean verbally abused, threatened, or been a nuisance to you?



InsNum        How many times has this happened in the last twelve months?  
INTERVIEWER: ENTER NUMBER OF TIMES

EmpBrit        Do you think there are employers in Britain who would refuse a job to a person because of their race, colour, religion or ethnic background?

EmpTrue        Do you think this is true of most employers, about half, fewer than half or hardly any?

RefJob        Have you yourself ever been refused a job for reasons which you think were to do with your race, colour or your religious or ethnic background?

FairWork        Have you yourself ever been treated unfairly at work with regard to promotion or a move to a better position for reasons which you think were to do with race, colour or your religious or ethnic background? (I don't mean when applying for a new job)

                The following questions are about your health now and your current daily activities.

SF12A        In general, would you say your health is...READ OUT..  
1 Excellent,  
2 Very good,  
3 Good,  
4 Fair,  
5 Poor

Lsi            Do you have any long-standing illness, disability or infirmity? By long-standing I mean anything that has troubled you over a period of time or that is likely to affect you over a period of time?

Limit        Does this illness or disability limit your activities in any way?

                Now I'm going to read a list of activities that you might do during a typical day. As I read each item, please tell me if your health now limits you a lot, limits you a little, or does not limit you at all in these activities?

SF12B        Moderate activities such as moving a table, pushing a vacuum cleaner, bowling, or playing golf? Does your health now limit you a lot, limit you a little, or not limit you at all?

SF12C        Climbing several flights of stairs? Does your health now limit you a lot, limit you a little, or not limit you at all?

SF12D        The following questions are about your physical health and your daily activities. During the past 4 weeks, have you accomplished less than you would like as a result of your physical health?

SF12E        During the past 4 weeks, were you limited in the kind of work or other regular daily activities you do as a result of your physical health?

The following questions are about your emotions and your daily activities.

SF12F During the past 4 weeks, have you accomplished less than you would like as a result of any emotional problems such as feeling depressed or anxious?

SF12G During the past 4 weeks, did you do work or other regular daily activities less carefully than usual as a result of any emotional problems, such as feeling depressed or anxious?

SF12H During the past 4 weeks, how much did pain interfere with your normal work, including both work outside the home and housework). Did it interfere...READ OUT...  
1 not at all,  
2 a little bit,  
3 moderately,  
4 quite a bit,  
5 or, extremely?

These next questions are about how you feel and how things have been with you during the past 4 weeks.

SHOW CARD M

As I read each statement, please give me the one answer that comes closest to the way you have been feeling; is it all of the time, most of the time, a good bit of the time, some of the time, a little of the time, or none of the time?

SF12I SHOW CARD M  
How much of the time during the past 4 weeks have you felt calm and peaceful? Please take your answer from this card.

SF12J SHOW CARD M  
How much of the time during the past 4 weeks did you have a lot of energy?

SF12K SHOW CARD M  
How much of the time during the past 4 weeks have you felt downhearted and low?

SF12L SHOW CARD M  
During the past 4 weeks, how much of the time has your physical health or emotional problems interfered with your social activities (like visiting with friends, relatives, etc.)?

SomaA Have you had any sort of ache or pain in the past month?

SomaB During the past month, have you been troubled by any sort of discomfort, for example, headache or indigestion?

SomaC Was this {TEXT FILL} ache or pain/discomfort brought on or made worse because you were feeling low, anxious or stressed?

INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF RESPONDENT HAS MORE THAN ONE PAIN/DISCOMFORT, REFER TO ANY OF THEM

SomaD In the past seven days, including last (DAY OF WEEK 7 DAYS AGO) on how many days have you noticed the {TEXT FILL} ache or pain/discomfort?

SomaE In total, did the {TEXT FILL} ache or pain/discomfort last for more than 3 hours on any day in the past week/on that day?

INTERVIEWER NOTE: EXCLUDE TIME SPENT SLEEPING

SomaF In the past week, has the ache or pain/discomfort been...READ OUT...  
1 very unpleasant,  
2 a little unpleasant or,  
3 not unpleasant

SomaG Has the ache or pain/discomfort bothered you when you were doing something interesting in the past week?

SomaH How long have you been feeling this ache or pain/discomfort as you have just described?

FatigA Have you noticed that you've been getting tired in the past month?

FatigB During the past month, have you felt you've been lacking in energy?

FatigC Do you know why you have been feeling tired/lacking in energy?

SHOW CARD N

FatigD What is the main reason? Can you choose from this card?

FatigE In the past seven days, including last (DAY OF WEEK 7 DAYS AGO) on how many days have you felt tired/lacking in energy?

FatigF Have you felt tired/lacking in energy for more than 3 hours in total on any day in the past week?

INTERVIEWER NOTE: EXCLUDE TIME SPENT SLEEPING

FatigG Have you felt so tired/lacking in energy that you've had to push yourself to get things done during the past week?

FatigH Have you felt tired/lacking in energy when doing things that you enjoy during the past week?

FatigI Have you in the past week felt tired/lacking in energy when doing things that you used to enjoy?

FatigJ How long have you been feeling tired/lacking in energy in the way you have just described?":

ForgetA In the past month, have you had any problems in concentrating on what you are doing?

ForgetB Have you noticed any problems with forgetting things in the past month?

ForgetC Since last (DAY OF WEEK 7 DAYS AGO) on how many days have you noticed problems with your concentration/memory?

ForgetD In the past week could you concentrate on a TV programme, read a newspaper article or talk to someone without your mind wandering

ForgetE In the past week, have these problems with your concentration actually stopped you from getting on with things you used to do or would like to do?

ForgetF Earlier you said you have been forgetting things. Have you forgotten anything important in the past seven days?

ForgetG How long have you been having the problems with your concentration/memory as you have described?

SleepA In the past month, have you been having problems with trying to get to sleep or with getting back to sleep if you woke up or were woken up?

SleepB Has sleeping more than you usually do been a problem for you in the past month?

SleepC On how many of the past seven nights did you have problems with your sleep?

SleepD Do you know why you are having problems with your sleep?

SleepE SHOW CARD O  
Can you look at this card and tell me the main reason for these problems?  
CODE ONE ONLY

SleepF Thinking about the night you had the least sleep in the past week, how long did you spend trying to get to sleep? (If you woke up or were woken up I want you to allow a quarter of an hour to get back to sleep)

INTERVIEWER: ONLY INCLUDE TIME SPENT TRYING TO GET TO SLEEP

SleepG In the past week, on how many nights did you spend 3 or more hours trying to get to sleep?

SleepH Do you wake more than two hours earlier than you need to and then find you can't get back to sleep?

SleepI Thinking about the night you slept the longest in the past week, how much longer did you sleep compared with how long you normally sleep for?

SleepJ In the past week, on how many nights did you sleep for more than 3 hours longer than you usually do?

SleepK           How long have you had these problems with your sleep as you have described?

IrritA           Many people become irritable or short tempered at times, though they may not show it.  
Have you felt irritable or short tempered with those around you in the past month?

IrritB           During the past month did you get short tempered or angry over things which now seem trivial when you look back on them?

IrritC           Since last (DAY OF WEEK 7 DAYS AGO), on how many days have you felt irritable or short tempered/angry?

IrritE           In total, have you felt irritable or short tempered/angry for more than one hour (on any day in the past week)?

IrritF           During the past week, have you felt so irritable or short tempered/angry that you have wanted to shout at someone, even if you haven't actually shouted?

IrritG           In the past seven days, have you had arguments, rows or quarrels or lost your temper with anyone?

IrritH           Did this happen once or more than once (in the past week)?

IrritI           Do you think this was justified?

IrritJ           Do you think this was justified on every occasion?

IrritK           How long have you been feeling irritable or irritable or short tempered/ angry as you have described?

PhysA           Many people get concerned about their physical health. In the past month, have you been at all worried about your physical health?

                 INTERVIEWER: INCLUDE WOMEN WHO ARE WORRIED ABOUT THEIR PREGNANCY

PhysB           During the past month, did you find yourself worrying that you might have a serious physical illness?

PhysC           Thinking about the past seven days, including last (DAY OF WEEK 7 DAYS AGO), on how many days have you found yourself worrying about your physical health/that you might have a serious physical illness?

PhysD           In your opinion have you been worrying too much in view of your actual health?

PhysE           In the past week, has this worrying been...READ OUT...  
1 very unpleasant,  
2 a little unpleasant or,  
3 not unpleasant?

PhysF In the past week, have you been able to take your mind off your health worries at least once, by doing something else?

PhysG How long have you been worrying about your physical health in the way you have described?

DepA Almost everyone becomes sad, miserable or depressed at times. Have you had a spell of feeling sad, miserable or depressed in the past month?

DepB During the past month, have you been able to enjoy or take an interest in things as much as you usually do?

DepC In the past week have you had a spell of feeling sad, miserable or depressed?

DepD In the past week have you been able to enjoy or take an interest in things as much as usual?

DepE Since last (DAY OF WEEK 7 DAYS AGO) on how many days have you felt sad, miserable or depressed/unable to enjoy or take an interest in things?

DepF Have you felt sad, miserable or depressed/unable to enjoy or take an interest in things for more than 3 hours in total (on any day in the past week)?

DepG SHOW CARD P  
What sorts of things made you feel {TEXT FILL} sad, miserable or depressed/unable to enjoy or take an interest in things in the past week? Can you choose from this card?

DepH SHOW CARD P  
What was the main thing?

DepI In the past week when you felt sad, miserable or depressed/unable to enjoy or take an interest in things, did you ever become happier when something nice happened, or when you were in company?

DepJ How long have you been feeling sad, miserable or depressed/unable to enjoy or take an interest in things as you have described?

IdeasA I would now like to ask you about when you have been feeling sad, miserable or depressed/unable to enjoy or take an interest in things. In the past week, was this worse in the morning or in the evening, or did this make no difference?

IdeasB Many people find that feeling sad, miserable or depressed/unable to enjoy or take an interest in things can affect their interest in sex. Over the past month, do you think your interest in sex has..READ OUT..  
1 ...increased,  
2 decreased,  
3 or has it stayed the same?,  
4 SPONTANEOUS: not applicable

When you have felt sad, miserable or depressed/unable to enjoy or take an interest in things in the past seven days...READ OUT...

IdeasC        have you been so restless that you couldn't sit still?

IdeasD        have you been doing things more slowly, for example, walking more slowly?

IdeasE        have you been less talkative than normal?

IdeasF        Now, thinking about the past seven days have you on at least one occasion felt guilty or blamed yourself when things went wrong when it hasn't been your fault?

IdeasG        During the past week, have you been feeling you are not as good as other people?

IdeasH        Have you felt hopeless at all during the past seven days, for instance about your future?

              The next few questions are about worrying.

WorryA        In the past month did you find yourself worrying more than you needed to about things?  
1 Yes, worrying,  
2 No/concerned

WorryB        Have you had any worries at all in the past month?

              SHOW CARD P

WorryC        Can you look at this card and tell me what sorts of things you worried about in the past month?

              SHOW CARD P

WorryD        What was the main thing you worried about?

WorryE        On how many of the past seven days have you been worrying about things (other than your physical health)?

WorryF        In your opinion have you been worrying too much in view of your circumstances?

              INTERVIEWER: REFER TO WORRIES OTHER THAN THOSE ABOUT PHYSICAL HEALTH":

WorryG        In the past week, has this worrying been...READ OUT...  
1 very unpleasant,  
2 a little unpleasant or,  
3 not unpleasant?

WorryH        Have you worried for more than 3 hours in total on any one of the past seven days?

WorryI        How long have you been worrying about things in the way that you have described?

AnxA Have you been feeling anxious or nervous in the past month?

AnxB In the past month, did you ever find your muscles felt tense or that you couldn't relax?

AnxC Some people have phobias; they get nervous or uncomfortable about specific things or situations when there is no real danger. For instance they may get nervous when speaking or eating in front of strangers, when they are far from home or in crowded rooms, or they may have a fear of heights. Others become nervous at the sight of things like blood or spiders. In the past month have you felt anxious, nervous or tense about any specific things or situations when there was no real danger?

AnxD In the past month, when you felt {TEXT FILL} anxious/nervous/tense, was this always brought on by the phobia about some specific situation or thing or did you sometimes feel generally anxious/nervous/tense?":

The next questions are concerned with general anxiety/nervousness/tension only. I will ask you about the anxiety which is brought on by the phobia about specific things or situations later.

AnxE On how many of the past seven days have you felt generally anxious/nervous/tense?

AnxF In the past week, has your anxiety/nervousness/tension been...READ OUT...  
 1 very unpleasant,  
 2 a little unpleasant, or  
 3 not unpleasant

SHOW CARD Q

AnxG In the past week, when you've been anxious/nervous/tense, have you had any of the symptoms shown on this card...

AnxH Have you felt anxious/nervous/tense for more than 3 hours in total on any one of the past seven days?

AnxI How long have you had these feelings of general anxiety/nervousness/tension as you described?



Sometimes people avoid a specific situation or thing because they have a phobia about it. For instance, some people avoid eating in public or avoid going to busy places because it would make them feel nervous or anxious.

PhobA In the past month, have you avoided any situation or thing because it would have made you feel nervous or anxious, even though there was no real danger?

PhobB SHOW CARD R  
Can you look at this card and tell me which of the situations or things listed made you the most anxious/nervous/tense in the past month?

PhobC SHOW CARD R  
Can you look at this card and tell me which of the situations or things did you avoid the most in the past month?

PhobD In the past seven days, how many times have you felt nervous or anxious about (SITUATION/THING)?

PhobE SHOW CARD Q  
In the past week, on those occasions when you felt anxious/nervous tense did you have any of the symptoms on this card?

PhobF In the past week, have you avoided any situation or thing because it would have made you feel anxious/nervous/tense even though there was no real danger?

PhobG How many times have you avoided such situations or things in the past seven days?

PhobH How long have you been having these feelings about these situations/things as you have just described?

PanicA Thinking about the past month, did your anxiety or tension ever get so bad that you got in a panic, for instance make you feel that you might collapse or lose control unless you did something about it?

PanicB How often has this happened in the past week?

PanicC In the past week, have these feelings of panic been...READ OUT...  
1 a little uncomfortable or unpleasant,  
2 or have they been very unpleasant or unbearable

PanicD Did this panic/the worst of these panics last for longer than 10 minutes?

PanicE Are you relatively free of anxiety between these panics?" :

PanicF {REFER TO SITUATION/THING AT PhobB}  
Is this panic always brought on by situation/thing?

PanicG How long have you been having these feelings of panic as you have described?

CompA        In the past month, did you find that you kept on doing things over and over again when you knew you had already done them, for instance checking things like taps or washing yourself when you had already done so?" :

CompB        On how many days in the past week did you find yourself doing things over again that you had already done?

CompD        During the past week, have you tried to stop yourself repeating BEHAVIOUR/doing any of these things over again?

CompE        Has repeating BEHAVIOUR/doing any of these things over again made you upset or annoyed with yourself in the past week?

CompG        Since last (DAY OF WEEK) how many times did you repeat BEHAVIOUR when you had already done it?

CompH        How long have you been repeating BEHAVIOUR/any of the things you mentioned in the way which you have described?

ObsessaA     In the past month, did you have any thoughts or ideas over and over again that you found unpleasant and would prefer not to think about, that still kept on coming into your mind?

ObsessB     Can I check, is this the same thought over and over again or are you worrying about something in general?

ObsessD     Since last DAY OF WEEK, on how many days have you had these unpleasant thoughts?

ObsessE     During the past week, have you tried to stop yourself thinking any of these thoughts?

ObsessF     Have you become upset or annoyed with yourself when you have had these thoughts in the past week?

ObsessG     In the past week, was the longest episode of having such thoughts...READ OUT..  
                  1 a quarter of an hour or longer, or  
                  2 was it less than this?

ObsessH     How long have you been having these thoughts in the way which you have just described?

                 Now I would like to ask you how all of these things that you have told me about have affected you overall.

OverallA     In the past week, has the way you have been feeling ever actually stopped you from getting on with things you used to do or would like to do?

OverallB     In the past week, has the way you have been feeling stopped you doing things once or more than once?

OverallC     Has the way you have been feeling made things more difficult even though you have got everything done?

There may be times in everyone's life when they become very miserable and depressed and may feel like taking drastic action because of these feelings.

SelfHmA Have you ever felt that life was not worth living?

SelfHmB Was this...READ OUT...:  
 1 In the last week?,  
 2 In the last year?,  
 3 Or, at some other time?

SelfHmC Have you ever wished that you were dead?

SelfHmD Was this...READ OUT...  
 1 In the last week?,  
 2 In the last year?,  
 3 Or, at some other time?

Self2hmD Have you ever thought of taking your life, even if you would not really do it?

SelfHmE Was this... READ OUT  
 1 In the last week?,  
 2 In the last year?,  
 3 Or, at some other time?

SelfHmF Have you ever made an attempt to take your life, by taking an overdose of tablets or in some other way?

SelfHmG Was this... READ OUT  
 1 In the last week?,  
 2 In the last year?,  
 3 Or, at some other time?

Self2HmG Did you try to get help from anyone following this attempt?

SelfHmH SHOW CARD S  
 Who did you try to get help from?  
 CODE ALL THAT APPLY

SelfHmI Who was the other person you asked for help? [OPEN]

SelfHmJ Have you deliberately harmed yourself in any way but not with the intention of killing yourself?

SelfHmK Did you...READ OUT...  
 1 cut yourself,  
 2 burn yourself,  
 3 swallow any objects or  
 4 harm yourself some other way?  
 CODE ALL THAT APPLY

SelfHmL Did you do any of these things to draw attention to your situation or to change your situation?

SelfHmM Did you do any of these things because it relieved unpleasant feelings of anger, tension, anxiety or depression?

SelfHmN Have you received medical attention for deliberately harming yourself in any of these ways?

SelfHmO      Have you seen a psychologist or counsellor because you had harmed yourself?

SelfEnd      The sorts of things we have talked about are very serious, and it is important that you talk to your doctor about these thoughts.

PSQA      Over the past year, have there been times when you felt very happy indeed without a break for days on end?

PSQB      Was there an obvious reason for this?

PSQC      Did your relatives or friends think it was strange or complain about it?

PSQD      Over the past year, have you ever felt that your thoughts were directly interfered with or controlled by some outside force or person?

PSQE      Did this come about in a way that many people would find hard to believe, for instance, through telepathy?

PSQF      Over the past year, have there been times when you felt that people were against you?

PSQG      Have there been times when you felt that people were deliberately acting to harm you or your interests?

PSQH      Have there been times when you felt that a group of people were plotting to cause you serious harm or injury?

PSQI      Over the past year, have there been times when you felt that something strange was going on?

PSQJ      Did you feel it was so strange that other people would find it very hard to believe?

PSQK      Over the past year, have there been times when you heard or saw things that other people couldn't?

PSQL      Did you at any time hear voices saying quite a few words or sentences when there was no one around that might account for it?

SHOW CARD T  
I am going to read a list of questions. Please look at this  
show card and choose the reply that comes closest to how  
you have been over the past two weeks

SFQA        SHOW CARD T  
I complete my tasks at work and home satisfactorily

SFQB        SHOW CARD T  
I find my tasks at work and home very stressful

SFQC        SHOW CARD U  
I have no money problems

SFQD        SHOW CARD V  
I have difficulties in getting and keeping close  
relationships

SFQE        SHOW CARD W  
I have problems in my sex life

SFQF        SHOW CARD X  
I get on well with my family and other relatives

SFQG        SHOW CARD Y  
I feel lonely and isolated from other people

SFQH        SHOW CARD Y  
I enjoy my spare time

PersDis     SHOW CARD Z  
Do you, in general, have difficulties getting on with  
people?

Now, some questions about religion

The following questions concern your religious and  
spiritual beliefs. Please try to answer them even if you  
have little interest in religion.

In using the word religion, we mean the actual practice of  
a faith, e.g. going to a temple, mosque, church or  
synagogue. Some people do not follow a religion but do  
have spiritual beliefs or experiences. For example, they  
believe that there is some power or force other than  
themselves, which might influence their life. Some people  
think of this as God or Gods, others do not. Some people  
make sense of their lives without any religious or  
spiritual belief.

Relig        Therefore, would you say that you have a religious or  
spiritual understanding of your life?

Rstrong     SHOW CARD AA  
How strongly do you hold to your religious/spiritual view  
of life? Please look at this card and tell me the number  
that best describes your view, where 0 is a weakly held  
view and 10 is a strongly held view.  
INTERVIEWER ENTER NUMBER

SpecRel     Do you have a specific religion?

WhatRel        Which religion is that?

OthRel        {INTERVIEWER: TYPE IN OTHER ANSWER GIVEN}

ImpRel        SHOW CARD AA  
How important is religion to the way you live your life?  
Please look at this card and tell me the number that best  
describes your view, where 0 is not at all important and  
10 is very important.  
INTERVIEWER ENTER NUMBER

ImpPrac        SHOW CARD AA  
How important to you is the practice of your belief (e.g.  
private meditation, religious services) in your day-to-day  
life? Please look at this card and tell me the number that  
best describes your view, where 0 is not necessary and 10  
is a essential.  
INTERVIEWER ENTER NUMBER

Praynum        SHOW CARD AB  
How often do you attend services or prayer meetings or go  
to a place of worship?

Force         SHOW CARD AA  
Do you believe in a spiritual power or force other than  
yourself that can influence what happens to you in your  
day-to-day life? ? Please look at this card and tell me  
the number that best describes your view, where 0 is no  
influence and 10 is a strong influence.  
INTERVIEWER ENTER NUMBER

ForCope        SHOW CARD AA  
Do you believe in a power or force other than yourself  
that can enable you to cope personally with events in your  
life? Please look at this card and tell me the number that  
best describes your view, where 0 is no help and 10 is a  
great help.  
INTERVIEWER ENTER NUMBER

ForInfl        SHOW CARD AA  
Do you believe in a power or force other than yourself  
that can influence world affairs e.g. wars? Please look at  
this card and tell me the number that best describes your  
view, where 0 is no  
influence and 10 is a strong influence.  
INTERVIEWER ENTER NUMBER

InfDisas        SHOW CARD AA  
Do you believe in a power or force other than yourself  
that can influence natural disasters, such as earthquakes,  
floods? Please look at this card and tell me the number  
that best describes your view, where 0 is no influence and  
10 is a strong influence.  
INTERVIEWER ENTER NUMBER

Commun        Do you communicate in any way with any spiritual power or  
force, for example by prayer or contact via a medium?

RspkLang Do you regularly speak to anyone in Britain in any language apart from English? (IF CARIBBEAN: or in Patois or Creole)

OspkLang Does anyone regularly speak to you in Britain in any language apart from English? (IF CARIBBEAN: or in Patois or Creole)?

RwhatLan Apart from English, what language do you regularly speak in, or do others speak to you in, in Britain?

ROthLan INTERVIEWER: WRITE IN OTHER LANGUAGE(S)

SwhatLan Do you normally speak this/any of these languages to members of your family who are of your own age?

OwhatLan Do you normally speak this/any of these languages to members of your family who are older than you?

YwhatLan Do you normally speak this/any of these languages speak to members of your family who are younger than you?

WwhatLan Do you normally speak this/any of these languages to people at your work?

FwhatLan Do you normally speak this/any of these languages to friends (outside work)?

AsCloth Do you ever wear Asian clothes such as sari, shalwar, kamiz, kurta or pyjama?

AclNum Do you wear Asian clothes all the time or only sometimes?

AclHome Do you ever wear Asian clothes...READ OUT AND CODE ONE FOR EACH...  
...at home?

ACLOth ...in the homes of other Asians?

AclSoc ...at social events?

AclWork ...at work?

Aclshop ...to the shops?

CaribCl Do you ever wear anything or wear your hair in a style that is meant to show a connection with the Caribbean or Africa?

CclNum Do you usually do this, or do it just occasionally?

MarView Now some questions on marriage. Do you think that most people of {RESPONDENT'S ETHNIC ORIGIN} would mind if one of their close relatives were to marry a white person.

ViewMind Would they mind very much or just a little?

MarPers Would you personally mind if a close relative were to marry a person who was not {ETHNIC ORIGIN}?

PersMind Would you mind very much or just a little?

VolWork	In the last year, have you done any unpaid voluntary work to help people or benefit the community through some organisation?
PplMix	In your work with this organisation, are/were you mainly in contact with people of {ETHNIC ORIGIN} mainly with white or about equally with both?
Clubs	Apart from this, in the last year, have you taken part in activities run by clubs or organisations?
Activ	Do/did your activities with this organisation bring you mainly into contact with people of (ETHNIC ORIGIN) origin?, or mainly with white people, or about equally with both?
	IF MORE THAN ONE ORGANISATION, ASK ABOUT ONE RESPONDENTS SPENT MOST TIME INVOLVED IN
AuxText	SHOW CARD AC I am now going to read out some statements. Please tell me for each whether you agree or disagree.
ThBrit	SHOW CARD AC In many ways, I think of myself as being British
ThEth	SHOW CARD AC In many ways I think of myself as {RESPONDENT'S ETHNIC ORIGIN}
IdPres	SHOW CARD AC People of {RESPONDENT'S ETHNIC ORIGIN} should try to preserve as much as possible of their culture and way of life
AdCult	SHOW CARD AC People of (RESPONDENT'S ETHNIC ORIGIN) origin should adopt more the culture and way of life of white people?
RepCult	SHOW CARD AC People of (RESPONDENT'S ETHNIC ORIGIN) origin are seeing their way of life and culture being replaced by the culture of white people.
Thank	That is the end of the interview. THANK THE RESPONDENT.
ReInter	If at some future date we wanted to talk to you further about your health, may we contact you to see if you are willing to help us again?
TelNo	Some interviews in any survey are checked to make sure that people are satisfied with the way the interview was carried out. Just in case yours is one of the interviews that is checked, it would be helpful if we could have/confirm your telephone number. IF GIVEN, WRITE TELEPHONE NUMBER ON ARF.



**OBJECTIVES:**

- to explore respondent's own personal ideas, beliefs and accounts of the stresses and strains of everyday life and the impact of these upon their own wellbeing;
- to understand how good or bad they perceive their everyday lives to have been recently and more long term;
- to hear their stories or accounts about why and how some times have been better or worse than others.

**EXPLAIN:**

About the National Centre, confidentiality, tape recording & timing

**1. INTRODUCTION**

*start off by saying a little bit about yourself...*

- who lives with
- age

**2. CURRENT CIRCUMSTANCES**

*To get a picture of your life in the recent months...*

**Interviewer note:**

- probe all areas listed below
- use your discretion to explore periods/issues of difficulty and distress as they arise or at the end of the current circumstances section. All difficult and distressing times should be explored fully using section 4 of this guide

**Housing & household relationships**

- how long lived here/where moved from
- current tenure
- likes and dislikes about
- explore the nature of household relationships

**Wider family**

- where they live
- level of contact

**Ethnicity**

- ask respondent to explain the ethnic identity they cited in the previous survey (as stated on recruitment questionnaire)

#### Friendships

- whether have friendships outside their family/household
- establish how important friendships are
- where lacking in friends establish why

#### How spends daily life

*probe for the following:*

- caring for children/relatives
- working in the home
- working for family
- paid employment
- education

#### Employment

- any work outside the home
- if so      occupation  
                 nature of work  
                 level of time commitment  
                 likes and dislikes about work
- if not      when last worked  
                 previous occupation

#### Education/training

- any education at present
- what studying/learning
- objectives when finished

#### Other activities outside the home

- voluntary/community activity
- hobbies/interests outside of work

#### Health

- general perception of health
- any difficulties – probe only for major ones

#### Finances

- views about current financial status
- whether adequate
- difficulties/debt

#### Discrimination/Racism

- experience of in daily life
- probe especially for neighbourhood, work environment

#### Religion/Spirituality

- whether have a religious affiliation/belief
- explore the role religious/spiritual beliefs play everyday life

### 3. PERCEPTION OF DIFFICULTY & DISTRESS

Expectations of Happiness/individual satisfaction

- whether expects for other people/what sorts of people
- whether expects happiness/individual satisfaction for themselves in life

Perception of life now

- establish whether see their life now as mainly happy or not/as difficult or relatively carefree

*If not so happy/more difficult now*

- identify the main causes of unhappiness/difficulty at present (if not already obvious)
- memories of happy times in past – what has changed?
- explore each period of difficulty fully using Section 4 below
- difficulties should only be explored if they are current or recent (within past 5 years). Note however that an individual can experience current difficulty/distress because of something that happened sometime in the past. If this is the case it should be explored.

*If happy/not difficult now*

- explore briefly what features make it a happy time for them
- establish what helps sustain happiness in their lives
- explore how current circumstances compare with previous life circumstances

*If past circumstances difficult*

- identify time(s) in past that recall as most difficult/distressing
- explore each difficult period using Section 4 below

*If past circumstances equally happy*

- move to the end of the interview

### 4. EXPERIENCE OF DIFFICULT OR DISTRESSING PERIODS (whether current or previous) \*\*\*KEY SECTION\*\*\*

*Use the following section to explore periods of difficulty or distress in life identified by the respondent*

Nature of difficulty or distress

- ask them to describe in their own words why they identify the circumstances as difficult
- determine how and in what ways do these worries, stresses, strains or difficulties trouble them

Possible causes

- how see or understand what is happening to them
- how they feel the difficulty came about
- explore fully– who or what they believe made it arise

How describe what is happening to them

- explore what terms the respondent uses to describe both the difficulty and the effect/impact it has on their life
- probe fully the meaning of all terms
- do not introduce terms like illness/illhealth/disease unless they do

## Effects and impacts

*Investigate which areas of their life are affected by difficulty/distress*

### Practical

- explore whether difficulty/distress has affected ability to do things
- which activities/duties have been affected

### Bodily/Physical

- establish in the course of probing about period of difficulty whether it has ever brought about:
  - tearfulness
  - tiredness
  - bodily aches and pains
  - loss of appetite

### Emotional

- how they feel about themselves/make sense of what is happening to them
- whether how they think is affected
- probe, as appropriate, whether the time of difficulty or distress affected:
  - their sense of self worth
  - feeling of purpose
  - sense of control over their lives
  - feelings of hope about the future
  - ability to concentrate
  - interest in other things

### Other effects/impacts

Establish shorter and longer lasting effects

### Solutions

- whether perceive difficulty as changeable/subject to improvement
- investigate what factors could bring about improvement/change in circumstances

### Role of other people in life

- how family/friends view what is happening to them
- how relate to other family/friends during period of difficulty
- explore whether & how family/friends are a support during difficult times

### Strengths & support

- explore what factors determine whether they seek help or not
- what helps them through this period
  - personal resources
  - others around in similar circumstances
  - others who understood what going through
  - any involvement with GP
  - use of health services or statutory / voluntary organisations
    - which services/organisations & for what purpose
- identify most positive or helpful source of support or help was

## Overcoming distress & difficulty

### *if in the past*

- whether / how event or period ended
- anything they tried to do / managed to do
- what precipitated change
- what prevented change
- what made things worse

### *if current*

- move to section 5

## 5. POTENTIAL SUPPORT AND HELP

What would have made a difference to them at times when they have experienced difficulty/distress

- knowledge of different places/services available
- who runs them
- what do they do
- how did/can they help

Explore what could / should be done

- to help people in same situation
- to help people avoid being in that situation
- what needs to change
- what difference would it make

What needs to be learnt from their experiences

### **To finish...**

- Thank the respondent, give them the incentive & get them to sign a receipt
- If appropriate, acknowledge any difficulties or distress experienced during the interview
- If necessary, suggest the respondent contact their GP to discuss their difficulties/distresses further
- Also, leave a copy of the leaflet containing useful contact telephone numbers
- If other organisations may be useful, suggest getting back in touch with details

## Appendix C

### Interviewer effect

Each of the interviewers was asked to describe their own ethnicity. The way in which respondents talked about their ethnicity was then explored in light of these characteristics, exploring whether people's discussions varied with the ethnicity of the interviewer. In actuality, this process was of only limited value as the ethnic and language matching of interviews and the small number of interviewers meant that almost all respondents in some ethnic groups (of those analysed here) were interviewed by one person. All interviews with white British people, for example, were carried out by one (mixed ethnicity, Black Caribbean and white British) interviewer. Non-English speaking respondents were also interviewed by the same interviewers, which means differences which could be considered a consequence of interviewer characteristics may be a consequence of issues related to language use, discussed elsewhere. For example, the only interview with a Bangladeshi respondent which was carried out by someone who was not of Bangladeshi extraction, was also the only interview with a Bangladeshi person (for whom interviewer information is available) which was carried out in English.

There were no Pakistani interviewers working on the study, and the Pakistani respondents speaking Urdu and Punjabi were interviewed by a Bangladeshi interviewer. These respondents described themselves as being 'Pakistani' or 'British' and 'Muslim'. Those interviewed in English by white respondents appeared to enter into more depth when discussing the customs and traditions of Pakistani 'life', suggesting an assumed need for further elaboration not required with the Bangladeshi interviewer. These respondents also used the term 'Asian', either in their preferred ethnic label, or while talking about their life in Britain. Again, this may be because of issues associated with their English-language use rather than related to interviewer characteristics. One respondent interviewed by a Bangladeshi interviewer took some time to explain: *"I am Pakistani, I was born and brought up in Pakistan and I have come here from Pakistan, and we are Pathan and erm so we are from the Northern area of Pakistan and I am a Muslim, that's how I would describe myself"* (BM65), using a degree of detail which might have been unnecessary if she had been interviewed by a Pakistani interviewer.

The Indian respondent interviewed by a Bangladeshi interviewer in a combination of Hindi and English described himself as 'Asian', while suggesting that his lifestyle was 'British'. This label therefore appears to have been used to consolidate his 'Indian' ancestry with his 'British' lifestyle, regardless of any perceived need to be specific as a consequence of the ethnicity of the interviewer. The respondent in one interview (in English), which was carried out by two interviewers – one Indian and one Bangladeshi – said:

*I'm mixed race because my dad is Indian, my mum is English, so if anyone ever asks me I always say I'm mixed race but we refer to ourselves as Anglo-Indian or, I mean on looks-wise, people would say that I'm Indian, so if I have to tick a box I'll be Asian...when you come into job opportunities and stuff like that, that's what they're doing it on, they're not doing it on, oh, she's mixed race, they're doing it on, you know, what you look like*

(LN113, Indian female, aged 27, born in GB)

Indian respondents interviewed by Irish and white British interviewers considered themselves 'British Indian', each mentioning the importance of both cultures. The remaining interviews with Indian respondents were carried out in English with an Indian interviewer. Interestingly, three of the four interviewees described themselves as 'Asian', either as a principal descriptor or when discussing their life: coming from an 'Asian family', for example. Although one respondent described themselves as having been born in the Punjab, rather than in India. In each case (of the four), there was reference to having a multitude of possible descriptors and that British people (and forms) were insensitive to the subtleties of the distinctions between the different South Asian groups - and to the further subdivisions within the label 'Indian' - and refused to accept them as 'English'. Perhaps interestingly, neither of the Indian respondents interviewed by white people mentioned these problems.

Black Caribbean respondents were interviewed by a mixed Black Caribbean and white British interviewer, a white British interviewer and an Irish interviewer. Irish respondents were interviewed by white British and Irish people. There appeared to be no systematic variation between the interviews by interviewer ethnicity for either group. It is interesting, however, that one Irish respondent interviewed by a white British interviewer felt the need to expand his comment on his close connection to Ireland by saying: "*it's not genoistic, I mean we don't play rebel songs or, you know, shout 'up the IRA' or something.*" (LN127). It is unlikely that a similar elaboration would have been felt necessary if the interviewer had been considered 'Irish'.

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Thanks go:

To Dad. I've always felt that I was doing this for you. You've always supported and respected my decisions and strived to give me anything I wished for: even when you didn't understand quite why I had to do it, or why it had to be quite so expensive! This is what has got me here today. To Mum, for your intellectual comment and death-defying pogo dancing, although I'm not sure *all* the answers are in the 'Collins Dictionary of Sociology'. And to Holly, my big little sister. You taught me to stand up for what I believe in. I will never be as wonderful, or as talented, as you. It makes me proud that you think I might come somewhere close.

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And, finally, to the researched. This work has shown me that, despite our best efforts, many of our respondents do not understand what benefits we bring when we turn up at their door. Yet still they let us in. I hope that one day their faith will be rewarded and they will be able to see the difference that we feel we make.

The drinks are on me.



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<sup>1</sup> Due to small sample sizes and based on the similarity of sociodemographic profiles and answers to the questions exploring ethnic identity, Pakistani and Bangladeshi respondents were combined for these analyses.

<sup>2</sup> The 'one drop rule' originated in the southern states of the USA, where one drop of 'Black blood' designated an individual Black. It mandated that a child of mixed ethnic heritage be relegated to the racial group of the lower status parent.

<sup>3</sup> The resident population for the Irish group was estimated using data from the 1991 British census, Sample of Anonymised Records, which includes information on the proportion of the population born in the Republic of Ireland.

<sup>4</sup> As well as the HSE99, the Chinese sample had participated in an earlier study exploring health-related behaviour and beliefs among the Chinese community (Sproston et al 1999).

<sup>5</sup> Sylheti is a dialect of Bengali and, as such, has no written form. The figures for Bengali and Sylheti interviews have therefore been combined.

<sup>6</sup> People considered to have possible experience of mental distress were those who either reported experience of a situation which would be considered to be potentially distressing or who achieved a possibly clinically significant score on a measure of depression, both determined using information collected during the quantitative survey

<sup>7</sup> The qualitative data was analysed using a method called Framework which requires the data to be organised using charts. Framework is described in more detail later.

<sup>8</sup> As the number of questions to be asked of the ethnic minority sample in the FNS was large, the questionnaire and the sample was divided into halves, with one half of the sample being asked only one half of the questions.

<sup>9</sup> This question loaded in the opposite direction for this group, compared with the findings for the ethnic minority groups.

<sup>10</sup> This question was not asked of people of Irish origin, so these respondents were coded 'never'.

<sup>11</sup> For Irish respondents, the term 'English' was used; for people from other (non-white) ethnic minority groups, the term 'white' was used.

<sup>12</sup> The term used was determined by the ethnic group of the respondent

<sup>13</sup> Perhaps surprisingly, among this sample of 'Irish' people in England there appears to be less recourse to religious terminology when defining 'ethnicity', or yourself more generally. It was unclear whether these respondents were from Northern or southern Ireland, although some of those 'Irish' people who classified themselves as 'British' or 'English' had links with Northern Ireland: *"I consider myself British ... I suppose I'm Irish... but I actually come from Northern Ireland which, as you know, is part of Britain."* (LA21)

<sup>14</sup> Each of these respondents used the phrase 'mixed race', rather than 'half caste', a phrase now considered obsolete. While some comments suggested that either phrase could be used interchangeably, others clearly recognised the shift in common parlance, with the phrase 'half caste' being used as clarification for this perceived unfamiliar terminology: *'I'm mixed race, half-caste it used to be called, it is mixed race now'* (NT25); *'mixed race as you have to say'* (LN65)

<sup>15</sup> Although this was not necessarily to the exclusion of a discussion of 'we' as part of the British nation. WY32, who described himself as 'British Asian' saying, in response to his perceived experiences of institutional racism: *'we like to talk about other countries of the world, you understand, but we can't get our own back garden in order'*